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OPINION METER

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INSIDE



Christmas Party

The Northern Islands Mayor's Office hosted Thursday a Christmas party for its employees as an appreciation for their hard work and contribution this 2011.

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Warning Signs

The chief justice of the Philippine Supreme Court warned Wednesday that President Benigno Aquino III's moves to oust him could lead to a dictatorship.

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BOE probes commissioner, 5 other PSS execs. PAGE 2
CUC formally proposes new MFAC model. PAGE 3

HR 1466 taken off Congress calendar

» As Fitial works on new visa for certain foreign workers in CNMI

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan's bill seeking a grant of "CNMI-only resident status" to four groups of nonresidents including immediate relatives of U.S. citizens was removed from the U.S. House of Representatives calendar yesterday, a development that Gov. Benigno R. Fitial said ensures that H.R. 1466 won't get entertained before Congress goes on Christmas break.

See HR 1466 on Page 4

Fitial seeks IRS consultation on FICA tax

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial is seeking clarification from the U.S. Internal Revenue Service on the purported expiration of federal tax exemptions for Filipino and Korean workers in the CNMI, and expects that the CNMI will be consulted prior to any "significant change in tax policy."

Fitial wrote a letter to IRS chief counsel William J. Wilkins, seeking clarification on an unofficial copy of an Oct. 5 communication from the IRS stating that Filipino workers are no longer exempted from paying Federal Insurance Contribution Act taxes because of the implementation of federal immigration in the CNMI.

FICA covers Social Security and
See FITIAL on Page 4



FIRE CHIEFS ON ISLAND

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and Rep. Stanley Torres (Ind-Saipan) join visiting members of the International Association of Fire Chiefs led by its president Al H. Gillespie of Nevada, Western Fire Chiefs Association chief executive officer Jeffrey D. Johnson of Oregon, and Western Pacific Islands Association of Fire Chiefs president Stanley C. Torres Jr. based in Guam, at a luncheon meeting at Fiesta Resort & Spa in Garapan yesterday.



Palacios

OAG seeks information from Rep. Palacios' cellphone calls

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Office of the Attorney General is seeking information from IT&E regarding the telephone number used by Rep. Raymond Demapan Palacios for a certain period.

The Superior Court's clerk of court issued a subpoena to IT&E upon

OAG's application pursuant to Commonwealth Rule of Criminal Procedure.

The court commanded IT&E to provide within seven days to the OAG's Criminal Division, subscriber information, toll records, and call logs for Palacios' cellphone for the period of Oct. 19, 2011.

The court informed IT&E that failure to comply with the subpoena may constitute the

crime of contempt of court and a warrant may be issued for an arrest.

According to police reports, members of the Drug Enforcement Task Force and Department of Public Safety's Criminal Investigation Bureau used a confidential source to buy a total of \$200 worth of "ice" from Palacios in two transactions that occurred

See OAG on Page 4

Local



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DUE TO ALLEGED CASH OUT OF ANNUAL LEAVE BOE probes commissioner, 5 other PSS execs

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The Board of Education is conducting a probe on Education Commissioner Dr. Rita A. Sablan and five other Public School System officials regarding their alleged cashing out of annual leaves, according to BOE vice chair Denise Tanya King.

She said BOE met on Wednesday for its regular monthly meeting and the issue on the alleged cashing out of annual leaves was among the agenda tackled during the executive session.

King declined to comment on what transpired during the board's closed-door meeting, but assured that the issue is now being addressed.

"I cannot disclose what transpired in the executive session of the board, but I can assure you that the matter is now being addressed and the investigation is ongoing," she told *Saipan Tribune* in a phone interview.

When asked if the board was the one that initiated the probe vs. Sablan and the five other officials, the vice chairperson said that with respect to separate entities, "they (board members) have the prerogative to do that if they want to."

King refused to provide more comments when pressed yesterday.

BOE members were recently

alerted by the alleged cashing out of annual leaves by Sablan and five officials of PSS.

Saipan Tribune learned that the five other PSS officials are PSS Finance director Richard Waldo, associate commissioner for instruction and curriculum Jackie Quitugua, former school principals Maria Quitugua and Frances Ulloa, and Bernice Diaz from PSS' fiscal and budget office.

A letter of complaint was received by the board from former Marianas High School principal Craig Garrison, who said that he was asked by some PSS employees to raise the issue to the board because they fear "retaliation."

Because of the matter, the House committee on education was later instructed by Speaker Eli Cabrera (R-Saipan) to review the matter and wants to seek the assistance of the Office of Public Auditor.

Cabrera earlier disclosed that he himself also received calls from some PSS employees sharing the same concerns.

Meantime, Public Auditor Michael Pai confirmed yesterday with *Saipan Tribune* that his office has not received any complaints or request for investigation on PSS executives who allegedly cashed out their annual leaves and thus no investigation is being conducted by his office.

In his letter to the board, Gar-

See BOE on Page 4

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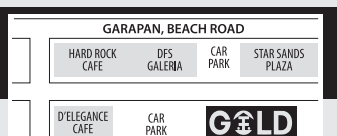
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IN LIEU OF COMPLICATED LEAC

CUC formally proposes new MFAC model

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp., through its consultant economists.com, formally filed on Dec. 8 testimony that included a recommendation to change the current levelized energy adjustment clause (LEAC) model.

CUC and economists.com described LEAC as having a high level of complexity that caused significant cost to ratepayers.

Economists.com recommended to the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission to adapt the MFAC, or the monthly fuel adjustment clause, which would be calculated on the first of every month using a new spreadsheet model developed by CUC. Compared to MFAC, LEAC model is calculated every six months.

Because of LEAC's complexity, CUC and CPUC engaged in numerous contentious disputes over the model's findings. These disputes involved the ultimate LEAC rate itself and the amounts of any alleged over-recovery by CUC of revenues relative to fuel expenses. These disputes have only added to the costs CUC and its ratepayers have been compelled to incur in order to maintain the LEAC.

The MFAC, according to economists.com, is based on a new and far less complex methodology. Because it is to be cal-

culated each month based on estimates of electric usage and fuel prices, the calculation will also include a "true-up" of actual revenue collected through the MFAC vs. actual fuel expense incurred by CUC.

It is proposed that on a quarterly basis, CUC's outside auditors prepare a true-up calculation based on CUC's audited financial statements. This calculation, according to the consultant, will be binding and will be included in the subsequent month's MFAC's calculation.

A preliminary discussion on

the possible change in LEAC model occurred during the commission's November meeting where CPUC asked both CUC and its consultant additional information about MFAC model. CUC first made the MFAC pro-

posal in a legislation now pending at the House.

According to the consultant, CUC experienced numerous difficulties operating and administering LEAC in the two years it has been implemented. It was

disclosed that under the LEAC model, CUC estimates that to date approximately \$300,000 to \$400,000 in fees and expenses has been specifically devoted to LEAC development and updates. CUC considers the level of time and expense it devotes to LEAC-related issues to be excessively burdensome for its ratepayers.

"CUC believes that the im-

plementation of the MFAC will eliminate these above issues, result in far less cost to NMI ratepayers and effort for CPUC and CUC staff, and ensure that as oil prices decrease the savings will be immediately passed through to ratepayers," the consultant's testimony to CPUC added. CPUC is expected to hear and decide on the matter next month.

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MVA BOARD NOMINEE:

CNMI needs upgraded and new hotels targeting high-end market

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

A nominee to the Marianas Visitors Authority board of directors said yesterday the CNMI needs to improve its tourism infrastructure, including upgrading hotels and building five-star hotels that target high-end tourist markets.

Kwang Joong Kim, whose name was resubmitted to the Senate by Gov. Benigno R. Fitial last month, presented his credentials and answered questions from members of the Senate Committee on Executive Appointments and Governmental Investigations during a public hearing on his nomination yesterday morning.

"I humbly accept if the Senate confirms me," Kim, president of Laolao Bay Golf Resort, later told *Saipan Tribune*.

He said the Legislature's approval of an amendment to law governing MVA just so a Korean businessman like him could also serve on the MVA board is "humbling," and vowed to work harder when confirmed by the Senate.

Sen. Frank Cruz (R-Tinian), EAGI Committee chair, said the panel expects to complete its report on the nomination soon so that the full Senate could act on his appointment before the end of the year.

Among those who testified in favor

of his nomination were House minority leader Joseph Deleon Guerrero (R-Saipan), MVA board chair Marian Aldan-Pierce, Tan Holdings president Jerry Tan, and public safety commissioner Ray Mafnas. They asked the Senate to confirm Kim's nomination. Dr. Jon Joyner, the governor's senior policy advisor, presented Kim to the Senate panel.

Kim, who has 25 years experience in tourism and airline business, said the CNMI needs to improve its tourism infrastructure including adding more tourist sites, upgrading existing hotels and building new ones that will cater to high-end tourist market.

"Hotels are out-of-date, they are old facilities. Tourists have high expectations. They don't want to stay in a hotel room that's old," he said.

Kim said the CNMI also needs efficient and affordable public transportation.

He said he will work harder to bring in more tourists to the CNMI, whose only industry is tourism.

When asked whether he thinks having casinos on Saipan will boost the CNMI economy, he said "yes" cautiously.

"It can bring more tourists. Because we already have tourists from China, Korea, and Japan, the main gambling markets in the world," he said. The Senate has yet to act on a House bill

legalizing casino gambling on Saipan.

Kim said he will also be working harder to further develop the CNMI as a golf destination in this part of the Pacific.

"Saipan is becoming famous as golf tourism area. Because Saipan has perfect weather, beautiful golf courses but only limited number of golf courses," he said, referring to Kingfisher Golf Club, Coral Ocean Point, Marianas Resort and Country Club, and Laolao Bay Golf Resort.

The Senate previously rejected Kim's nomination to the MVA board because he is not a U.S. citizen and was not eligible for the position. But a new law signed in September amended that requirement, allowing the nomination of a CNMI resident but is not a U.S. citizen or national. Kim is a Korean citizen.

OAG

From Page 1

on Oct. 19, 2011.

Palacios, 48, is out on bail after posting \$3,000 cash and \$27,000 unsecured bond. Police arrested the lawmaker last October 28.

Palacios pleaded not guilty to the information charging him with trafficking and illegal possession of controlled substance.

FITAL

From Page 1

Medicare taxes.

The governor, in his one-page letter, said the position identified in the attached IRS document is contrary to long-standing U.S. tax policy, and would have significant impact on the CNMI.

"I would anticipate that prior to the implementation of any significant change in tax policy that there would be prior consultation with both my office and that of Congressman Sablan," Fital told Wilkins.

The governor, in his letter, said he would like to request a meeting with Wilkins and both Delegate Gregorio Kilili Sablan (Ind-MP) and himself to discuss the matter.

In an interview, Fital said he strongly believes that there should not be two policies for the same subject when it comes to taxes.

"I don't believe that there should

be two different policies for FICA for the same type of subject. In other words, Filipinos working in Guam are exempted from FICA and Filipinos working in the CNMI are not exempted," he said in an interview after meeting with visiting officials from the International Association of Fire Chiefs at Fiesta Resort & Spa in Garapan yesterday afternoon.

Saipan Chamber of Commerce president Douglas Brennan also sought the help of Sablan, Interior Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs Tony Babauta, and the Fital administration in clarifying the impact of federalization on FICA tax exemptions for certain workers in the CNMI.

The government and the business community said requiring employees and employers to pay FICA taxes is an added cost during these times when businesses barely earn revenue.

A minimum wage earner in the CNMI pays over \$45 in FICA taxes a month. Their employers' share is almost \$62 a month.

BOE

From Page 2

rison alleged that Sablan, along with some members of her leadership team, cashed out their annual leaves which PSS employees believe is clearly against PSS' standing policy.

These employees believe that cashing out of annual leaves is only permitted if they resign or retire from PSS.

Saipan Tribune learned that the cashing out of unused annual leaves

took place some two months ago which disappointed many employees because of the current financial state of the public schools.

For Garrison, having the commissioner cash out her annual leave and the appearance of playing favorites and hiding it sets a very bad precedent during these difficult times.

Garrison asked BOE not only to look at the proper documentations on this but to curtail what he labeled as "poor decision making" and ensure that PSS money is better spent on the children of the CNMI.

HR 1466

From Page 1

Fital said HR 1466's removal from calendar is a result of his latest attempt to block the bill, which was placed on union calendar on Dec. 8.

Sablan couldn't be reached for comment as of press time last night, which was still early morning hour in Washington, D.C.

Fital, in an interview yesterday, said he continues to push for an H-5 visa within the regular U.S. immigration system. He said his proposed new visa is "far better alternative for the people of the Commonwealth than HR 1466."

Fital, who has long been opposed to HR 1466, said he hails U.S. House Committee on Natural Resources chair Rep. Doc Hastings' (R-WA) decision to remove the bill from the U.S. Congress' session calendar yesterday.

"This latest action may ensure that the controversial bill fails to be entertained in the final week of sessions for this year," Fital said in a statement.

Some nonresidents who heard the news yesterday said they're disappointed that the bill won't get passed before the end of the year.

Rene Reyes, president of Marianas Advocates for Humanitarian Affairs Ltd., however, said he's thankful that there is at least an option for many of those covered by HR 1466 to be able to lawfully remain in the CNMI at least until Dec. 31, 2012 while they continue to seek jobs.

Reyes was referring to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services' decision to grant parole, on a case-by-case basis, to immediate relatives of U.S. citizens and certain "stateless" individuals in the CNMI. These are among individuals covered by Sa-

blan's HR 1466.

"It's really disappointing. We're just thankful there's parole from USCIS," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

Reyes, however, said the removal from calendar may give an opportunity to have the bill changed to include all long-term aliens in the CNMI instead of only those with U.S. citizen children, among other things.

Blocking HR 1466

Fital said he wrote to congressional staffer Curtis Rhyne and Paul Teller, executive director for the U.S. House Republican Study Committee, "requesting members of Congress to defeat H.R. 1466."

The governor is the current president of the NMI Republican Party, and claims to have strong connection with Republicans in Congress.

"H.R. 1466 was created and sold with inaccuracy/dishonesty. Congressman Sablan claims that H.R. 1466 will affect just a few people when the reality is that it will impact over 10,000 people and will be used as a blueprint for 'amnesty' efforts in the mainland states," the governor said in a statement.

He also cited the bill's "potential harm" to the already ailing economy. Fital said former contract workers are now competing for scarce jobs and give rise to keeping local wages artificially low. Most of all, he said, individuals covered by HR 1466 "are not skilled labor workers."

"U.S. citizens will be made to suffer from unfair competition for low-skilled positions if there is a labor pool of thousands of guest workers readily available. This would prevent the CNMI economy from growing," the governor said.

He also argued that passage of HR 1466 "would only set a dangerous prec-

edent that would set the stage for more demands, more amnesty and less integrity in the U.S. immigration system."

"Chairman Hastings' decision is definitely a big step toward defeating a blatant attempt to drastically alter the NMI's indigenous traditions and culture. I hope that members of Congress would now take a closer look at the true ramifications of this flawed legislation," he said.

Others, including worker groups in the CNMI, oppose HR 1466 for a different reason—mainly because it does not include "all" long-term foreign workers in the CNMI.

In his statement, Fital also expressed his appreciation to Rep. Brian Bilbray (R-CA) and Rep. Steven King (R-IA) for their support and consideration of the arguments raised by the governor to the Republican Study Committee, or RSC.

He said he is also grateful to the RSC for their swift action in bringing his concerns to the members in the wake of what could have been a possible vote on HR 1466.

In his testimony against HR 1466 in July, Fital said the CNMI "treated guest workers well over the years, and we continue to do so."

"Some critics have cited poor working conditions. We corrected those long ago. Some cited an estimated \$6.1 million in backpay owed to guest workers over the 25 years since 1985. That estimate was wrong. The total turned out, after investigation, to be far lower," he said.

He reiterated that "all claims of backpay have been adjudicated; and only a relatively few cases remain in our courts."

But worker groups said while there have been adjudications of labor cases, workers victimized by their previous

and current employers have yet to collected over \$6 million in back wages, interests and other court judgments.

Fital said other critics have pointed to alleged human trafficking violations.

"Human trafficking is a federal crime and the only fair measure is convictions in federal cases—not allegations or rumors. Federal convictions over the past 10 years have been very, very few. Our record over the years is the equal to, and we think better than anywhere aliens are employed in large numbers in the United States. And we understand why aliens in the Commonwealth want to stay. They have freedoms, are treated well, and have employment opportunities and social benefits," he said.

New visa

A few hours before issuing a statement on HR 1466's removal from calendar, Fital told reporters in an interview that he is still proposing to U.S. Congress a legislation that will create an employment-based visa within the regular federal immigration system that will, among other things, allow unemployed foreign parents of minor U.S. citizen children to remain in the CNMI while they continue to look for a job.

"That visa will be employment-based and it's for those who have... children who are still minors. If they can qualify for and apply for that visa, then they can stay here and work," Fital said in an interview after a luncheon meeting with visiting members of the International Association of Fire Chiefs at Fiesta Resort & Spa in Garapan yesterday.

The governor said his proposal is separate from Sablan's HR 1466.

Fital also said those who qualify for the Commonwealth-only worker status are not covered by his proposed visa.

"If they have work, no problem. I'm

talking about those who have (U.S. citizen) children (and) are illegally residing and working underground," the governor said. "They have to find a job. The fact that they have immediate relatives like children, babies, they are qualified to look for work under this visa program."

The governor said his proposal is also separate from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services' parole, if granted, allows immediate relatives of U.S. citizens and certain stateless individuals to lawfully remain in the CNMI until Dec. 31, 2012.

Fital said he will bring up this proposal with Congress.

"USCIS cannot do anything about it. It has to be enacted. I already mentioned that in my last testimony when I said I don't like this bill (HR 1466), I said I have my own," he said.

Rabby Syed, president of United Workers Movement-NMI, said while he has yet to know more information about Fital's proposed visa, this may make the transition process more complicated than it already is.

Syed said UWM would only fully support legislation that will grant improved immigration status to all long-term foreign workers in the CNMI, unlike Sablan's HR 1466 or Fital's proposed visa, that only cover certain segments of the foreign worker population.

"I continue to request Congressman Kilili to include all legal long-term aliens in the CNMI, to allow them to be granted improved status—green card or pathway to U.S. citizenship," Syed said.

He said UWM hopes that in 2012, Congress will finally initiate granting improved status to long-term alien workers in the CNMI who entered the islands legally, have Social Security numbers and continue to contribute to the Commonwealth's economy.

Parties in sexual harassment lawsuit rest case

» Defendants call detective, 2 other witnesses

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the owners of Saipan Grand Hotel rested their cases yesterday in the ongoing jury trial of a sexual harassment lawsuit filed by EEOC on behalf of a band singer who alleged that the hotel's then restaurant manager made sexual advances on her.

Saipan Grand Hotel's owners, Asia Pacific Hotels Inc. and Tan Holdings Inc., rested their case after calling their witnesses—Grand Hotel personnel manager Joseph Ada, Detective Simon Manacop, and Grand Hotel employee Melinda Javier.

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona excused the eight jurors at 2:40pm yesterday and ordered them to come back today, Friday, for the 8:30am opening arguments.

After closing arguments, the judge normally gives jury instructions before directing the jurors to start their deliberations.

During examination by defendants Asia Pacific and Tan Holdings' counsel Steven Pixley, Ada explained that the reason why management decided to transfer the band singer and a roommate to another room was for their own protection from Tomas Alegre, the accused restaurant manager.

Ada said the room where the band singer and the roommate previously occupied doesn't have a surveillance camera.

Shown a letter provided to the band singer dated Jan. 15, 2008, Ada said the letter stated that management is not tolerating Alegre's action and that

the hotel will pursue the investigation until the end result.

Ada said a day after Alegre was arrested, Alegre showed up at the hotel still wearing his company uniform.

He said general manager Ed Cho asked Alegre what happened, then told Alegre he was placing him under suspension effective that day.

Ada said Alegre left the hotel but later came back so he called a security guard to escort him from the premises.

Ada said that on Jan. 12, 2008 he called Alegre and informed him that they were going to terminate him.

He said Alegre asked if he could just resign.

Ada said the general manager agreed since Alegre was leaving the company anyway.

The personnel manager stressed that on Jan. 2, 2008, when the alleged sexual advances happened, he conducted his investigation.

Ada said he and Victoria Won, the front office manager, was with him during the interview with the singer so he would have a female counterpart.

Ada said he also interviewed Alegre and several other persons.

He said to his knowledge

Alegre left Saipan for the Philippines on Feb. 1 or 2, 2008.

Ada said he also investigated other cases of sexual harassment that happened at the hotel between 2006 and 2007 and that the legal department reviewed his findings.

Ada said EEOC never complained to him about the hotel's compliance with the consent decree pertaining to anti-sexual harassment policies.

After Ada's testimony, the court heard defendants' motion for judgment as a matter of law on the EEOC's claim for punitive damages and motion to dismiss Tan Holdings from the lawsuit.

Pixley argued that there is no evidence that Asia Pacific intended to injure the singer or acted recklessly in the face of a

perceived risk of violating anti discrimination laws.

Pixley also cited that there is no evidence that Asia Pacific acted with malice as the company took immediate action to address the singer's claim of harassment by Alegre.

The lawyer said the singer and her roommate were moved to a different room, Alegre was immediately suspended, and then the incident was promptly investigated before finally forcing Alegre to resign or face termination.

EEOC trial attorney Derek Li asserted that the defendants were not taking its responsibility for employees seriously.

Li said Alegre himself stated that the management was not taking seriously the policy of not allowing anyone to get in-

side the employee's room.

Manglona said based on her review of the evidence she denied the motions.

Pixley then called to the witness stand, Manacop, who was among the police officers who investigated the case. Manacop reportedly eventually became the singer's boyfriend.

Manacop said his first meeting with the singer was on Jan. 4, 2008 at the Department of Public Safety.

The parties' lawyers only raised a few questions to Manacop.

After Manacop, Pixley called Javier, who used to work at Grand Hotel as food and beverage supervisor and was recently hired back by the hotel.

Javier said she believes then that the singer and Alegre had a

romantic relationship as she saw them once hugging in the hotel.

Javier recalled that while in their office, the phone rang and Alegre became excited and told the caller he was coming out.

Javier said Alegre was running so she was curious and followed him outside. She said she then saw Alegre and the singer hugging each other.

Javier said she also noticed at Club V that Alegre and the singer usually had "eye-to-eye contact."

Asked by EEOC counsel Nancy Griffiths whether she reported the matter (hugging) to any managers of the hotel, Javier replied "no."

Javier said Alegre and the singer were already off at the time as it was already past 2am.

"That's their life," she added.

Javier said no one interviewed her about the incident involving Alegre and the singer.

(Ferdie dela Torre)

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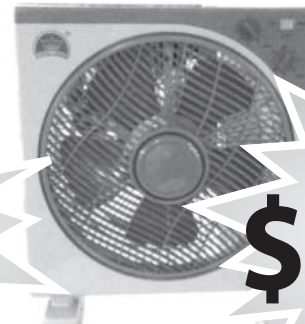
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Govendo orders mistrial in sexual abuse of a child case

Superior Court associate judge Kenneth L. Govendo yesterday declared a mistrial in the case against Alvin P. Iglecias, a 41-year-old man accused of sexually abusing a minor girl.

Govendo issued the order after both the prosecution and the defense counsel moved the court for a mistrial due to issues regarding discovery and Rule 413 of the Commonwealth Rules of Evidence.

Govendo's one-page order did not contain explanation and other information about

the motion.

On Wednesday, the Office of the Attorney General called a witness who claimed that Iglecias inappropriately touched her. Assistant public defender Douglas Hartig, counsel for the defendant, strongly objected to the testimony considering that the defense was not provided with it during the discovery period.

Saipan Tribune tried to get comment from assistant attorney general Shelli Neal, but as of press time she had yet to re-

spond to an email.

The jury trial of Iglecias, who is charged with one count of sexual abuse of a child, began on Monday.

With the mistrial order, the judge excused the seven jurors, including one alternate.

There was no schedule yet as to the date for a new trial.

Detective Melinda Villanueva stated in her report that a police officer responded to a residence in Dandan in May 2010 to investigate a report about a sexual abuse of a minor case.

Villanueva said when the police officer arrived at the house, the complainant was crying and appeared very upset.

The complainant asked that the two minor girls be transported away from the house for their safety.

Villanueva said Iglecias has been allegedly abusing one victim for four years already.

Villanueva said the second girl stated that the defendant also touched her private parts before, but that he stopped since then. *(Ferdie de la Torre)*

Igisomar wants two programs transferred from Fund

NMI Retirement Fund wants to focus its attention in running the Defined Benefit plan, but it could only do so if the pension program is no longer responsible for the Workers Compensation Commission and the Group Health Life Insurance Program.

Fund board chair Sixto K. Igisomar described the WCC and GHLIP as non-DB matters that should be transferred to other agencies like the Department of Commerce and Office of Management and Budget. Igisomar is the acting commerce secretary.

Igisomar said the plan to transfer the two programs has been on the table since the ad-

ministration of former Fund chair Juan T. Guerrero.

He added the plan to transfer the programs is in no way in anticipation of the pension plan's collapse.

The Fund's former actuarial consultant, Buck Consultants, earlier predicted that the pension program may only last up to three years if no new money comes into the investment fund, which currently has only \$261 million.

"Since the time of former chairman [Juan T. Guerrero], we've been pushing to have all these ancillary services assigned to the Fund to be removed from us so the Fund can focus only

on the DB plan and there were pending bills on those. With the creation of the Senate task force, to be chaired by Sen. Jovita Taimanao (Ind-Rota), we will continue to push for the removal of these non-DB matters," Igisomar told *Saipan Tribune*.

Saipan Tribune learned that the Fund wants the GHLIP transferred to either the Department of Finance or the Office of Personnel Management while it recommended the transfer of WCC to the Department of Commerce.

For the Fund, Commerce is the appropriate government entity to administer the functions of the Workers Compensation

due to its status as a permitting and enforcement agency to ensure compliance with the Workers Compensation Law, and to facilitate the implementation of "one-stop business processing" procedures.

According to Igisomar, because these two programs were assigned to the Fund, these also impact the operational budget of the agency because of the added services and task. In previous meetings of the Fund, trustees expressed frustration on the "problems and blames" they received for GHLI program, which ultimately is not the Fund's responsibility. *(Moneth G. Deposa)*

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Dec. 16, 1999

CUC's plan to scale back 80-MW project questioned

Denying accusations that lobbyists were behind efforts to press the initial plan on the controversial Saipan power project, Senate Floor Leader Pete P. Reyes has questioned moves by the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation to scale it back when it had insisted it was needed just a few months ago. He also said that he agreed with the decision by the government corporation to re-assess the entire project before pursuing its next step, but added that this should have been undertaken earlier when the independent evaluation was ongoing. Mr. Reyes has been in favor of holding oversight hearings on the project that has come under a storm of protests due to the initial review by CUC on all proposals submitted by 13 firms.

Bill eyes cap on recruitment fees

Due to the skyrocketing fees charged by local recruiters to foreign workers for jobs in the CNMI, lawmakers are seeking to cap the fee to an amount equivalent to a one month salary in a bid to stop the practice of milking hapless nonresidents who want to get employed on the island. The measure, sponsored by Rep. Karl T. Reyes, will also seek stiffer penalties against violators with a fine of not more than \$50,000 and/or imprisonment of up to three years. According to its proponent, House Bill 11-503 is part of the efforts of the Department of Labor and Immigration to reform local labor policies and curb abuses against nonresident workers on the island.

Dec. 16, 2002

PSS eyes model school for NMI's gifted children

The Public School System aims to develop a new school that caters only to talented and gifted children. Board of Education chairman Herman T. Guerrero said Friday that the issue has been discussed by the board and other key PSS to be able to meet the needs of that particular group of students in the CNMI. Failure to adequately address the need of the "genius type" students would cause some of them to wander rather than focus on regular classroom lessons. "They get bored if they're not challenged in regular classrooms," said Guerrero. He said the discussion on the creation of the school is still in the exploratory stage.

Less than half of homestead permits approved

The Marianas Public Lands Authority has issued 127 homestead permits, reflecting a less than 50 accomplishment rate compared to the total number of applications received in fiscal year 2002. The figure covers Saipan with 99 permits issued and Tinian with 36. Information on Rota was not immediately available, the MPLA said. On Saipan, the MPLA received 254 applications from October 2001 to September 2002, while on Tinian, 36 applications came in. Rota had 96 applications for homestead projects. On agricultural projects, the MPLA on Tinian received two applicants while Rota had 192.

Dec. 16, 2003

US House to hold hearing on NMI health issues

Following yesterday's visit to Saipan, Indiana Republican congressman Daniel Burton said he intends to hold a congressional hearing to help address various CNMI health-related issues, particularly the Commonwealth Health Center's inadequate facilities for dialysis patients as well as the alarming incidence of diabetes on the islands. "I'm going to do what I can when I go back to Washington to get our health agencies to pay more attention to this area. As a matter of fact, I think I'm going to hold a hearing in late January or early February on the health problems in this region. Hopefully, we'll be able to shake loose more money to help solve the problems over here," Burton told reporters. The Indiana congressman, together with Gov. Juan N. Babauta, Public Health Secretary James U. Hofschneider, and other local officials, toured the CHC yesterday morning.

CDA sues debtors to collect \$800K

The Commonwealth Development Authority has sued two sets of debtors at the Superior Court to collect unpaid loans amounting to more than \$800,000. In one of the two lawsuits, the CDA implored Juan M. and Mariana D. San Nicolas to collect at least \$759,066.96, inclusive of interests and charges. The debt stemmed from the defendants' acquisition of two loans amounting to \$525,000 and \$51,975. The defendants obtained the bigger loan on Feb. 24, 1999, while the second one was acquired on Jan. 4, 2000.

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Manta Ray Band to stage free holiday concert

» **Close to \$100K so far raised for Olympic trip**

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Saipan Southern High School's Manta Ray Band will stage a free holiday concert on Dec. 21 at the school's cafeteria.

William DeWitt, band musical director and conductor, said the special event will coincide with the school's monthly PTA

meeting and will start at 6pm.

The band, which is raising funds for its trip to the 2012 London Olympics, will also welcome donations from the audience.

DeWitt said the phenomenal talents of the fine arts department at SSHS will be on display in the cafeteria with festive decorations and seasonal backdrops created by students of the visual arts and ceramics classes under the guidance of their instructors.

He said there are over 150

Manta Ray musicians who will perform in the event starting with the beginning band with 45 members. They will be followed by the intermediate band students with 25 members, the advanced band with 50 members, and the award-winning "Advanced 2" band with 45 members who also prepared music for the musical play *Rapunzeled*.

DeWitt said aside from their performance in the 2012 London Olympics, the band will

also play in an invitational concert at Queen Elizabeth's conference center with four or five other elite high school bands from around the world.

The band is also expected to perform for current UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and his four predecessors as the Olympic Torch is revealed in their presence. They will also perform in a concert on the grounds of the revered Westminster Abbey as well as play in at least one show for Olympic

audiences at a sporting venue.

DeWitt said additional performances are being scheduled in Paris, France and in Switzerland following the Olympic performance.

"We have raised quite a bit of money in the last few months, but find ourselves earnestly needing to raise more! Within a week or so, we anticipate purchasing our air travel to London. Following that, we turn our attention to making the final payments for our ground package and Olympic accommodation fees while in the U.K. and Europe," DeWitt said.

The musical director said that so far the band had raised close

to \$100,000 for their travel expenses, including the \$1,500 fee charged to individual members.

Upcoming fundraisers for the band, he said, include a tree planting project, various concerts, solicitations from our generous business partners, and individual boosters throughout the CNMI and around the region.

DeWitt said the only community concert band, The Pacific Winds, will also be staging a concert on Dec. 22 with its 50 members, also at the same venue. Admission is free for the show which starts at 7pm. "But once again, donations are welcomed and encouraged!" added DeWitt.

Zoning OK's permit for dog transfer shelter

By **CLARISSA V. DAVID**
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Zoning board approved in a public hearing Wednesday the conditional use permit application of the Saipan Mayor's Office Dog Control Program to operate a dog transfer shelter.

Voting yes on the application were board chair Diego Blanco, vice chair Joe Limes, secretary Ed Arriola, and treasurer Alice Igitol.

The dog control program will be operating a dog transfer shelter on Lot 012-H17 located in between Casilda and Konsolacion Streets behind the post office in Chalan Kanoa.

Mayor Donald Flores, adviser Henry Hofschneider, and program manager Ray Lizama represented the applicant during the hearing.

Acting Zoning administrator Therese T. Ogomoro said in an interview yesterday that they recommended the approval of the application to the board based on the assessment of the public's concerns and the compatibility of the proposed trans-

fer shelter with the current zone in the area.

The area is currently zoned as Village Residential.

Ogomoro said Rep. Ralph Demapan (Cov-Saipan) of Precinct II attended the public hearing to raise his constituents' concerns about noise and other types of pollution that may be caused by dogs that will be kept in the transfer shelter.

"While Rep. Demapan expressed his support for the program, he advised us to be mindful of the concerns of the residents," Ogomoro told *Saipan Tribune*.

The board then approved the application with several conditions, including the proper disposal of animal wastes and carcasses or any chemicals used in compliance with local and federal regulations; taking reasonable measures to minimize noise to avoid disrupting the neighborhood's privacy; providing landscaping, where necessary; ensuring that proposed temporary structures are securely fenced and the number of kennels does not exceed 12; and compliance with the requirements of non-conforming structures.

Ogomoro added two further conditions during the hearing, which are securing appropriate permits from regulatory agencies that have jurisdiction on the shelter, and not confining dogs overnight at the transfer shelter or between 6pm and 6am.

"I appreciate the Zoning board for approving our request

and the residents in the area for raising their concerns," Flores said in a separate interview.

Flores said they will be complying with the conditions set by the Zoning board. He described these conditions as "workable" and a form of compromise between the program and the residents.

With the approval of the conditional use permit, Flores said they will be working with the

Commonwealth Utilities Corp. to see if the facility has a sewage system in place.

According to Flores, they will soon begin with the eradication component of the dog control program as the construction already began for the main dog shelter in Lower Base, which is spearheaded by the Northern Marianas Trades Institute.

"I'm very glad that we're now closer to doing the eradication part of the program in compliance with the law," said Flores.

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BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUTS



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Greetings to Esah Mariana Tomokane, who is celebrating her birthday today, Dec. 16. We love and miss you so much! From Grandpa Eb, Grandma Lo, and the family.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Birthday greetings going out to Hank P. Arurang Jr., who is celebrating his birthday today. Hope you have an amazing celebration and lots of blessings from our Lord. Greetings coming from Dad, Mom, Consoco John, Chicko Hensus, and the rest of the families. We love you always.

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Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

US must talk to Cuba on oil-drilling plans

Considering last year's deadly explosion on the Deepwater Horizon rig and all the oil that gushed into the Gulf of Mexico, it would be counterproductive for the United States to let a diplomatic stand-off get in the way of ensuring drilling in the Florida Straits meets the highest of standards.

Unfortunately, that appears to be happening. It's a relic of the Cold War—the ongoing iciness with Cuba's Castro-led government.

Rather than engage Havana one-on-one about its Florida Straits drilling plan, Washington has publicly said it prefers to go through multinational forums. Since Wednesday, for example, U.S. officials have had access to Cuban and Bahamian counterparts at an International Maritime Organization gathering.

At least they're talking to each other. But it makes no sense to engage Cuban officials on international platforms and not in direct talks, too. We hope more engagement is taking place through back channels.

Washington has conducted direct negotiations with Havana on other issues, such as immigration and military matters. Surely drilling in waters close to Florida's environmentally sensitive and economically vital coasts rises to the same priority level.

What if there is an accident similar to the 2010 episode in the Gulf? Will Washington then wait until the next IMO workshop to address the crisis with Havana?

We'd prefer that federal and state officials would already have critical contacts and information at hand, generated by multilateral and direct talks, public or not. Again, we hope talks are at least occurring behind the scenes.

Cuba's not the only concern for Florida. The Bahamas also is mulling its own oil exploration next year.

Bahamian officials have already worked with Cuban counterparts to address boundary issues. They were smart to do so.

We have long advocated democratic and free-market reforms in Cuba. No amount of oil-drilling revenue will boost the island's fortunes without fundamental reforms.

We just don't believe shunning direct talks on drilling will boost that transition.

Meanwhile, the Scarabeo 9—a floating, Chinese-rig—is sailing across the Pacific Ocean from Singapore to Cuba's north coast. As early as next month, it could be drilling just 70 miles from Florida waters.

Time is running out. The Obama administration would be smart to rethink its approach to Cuba oil-drilling discussions.

The IMO workshop that concludes today is a fine forum, we agree. But Washington should not box itself in by limiting talks on this critical issue to a U.N. agency.

Florida has too much at stake.

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Greener pastures

What happens if you have a great product that's wanted by your customers, impeccable service that gets them to return often, and your marketing campaign looks good; however, you just can't increase your revenue beyond the loyal customers that you have right now?

You should examine the potential customers that exist in your location to determine if there are enough to sustain your business. For some business owners, the solution to your financial challenge may be to take your business to where there is a market demand for what you have to sell. There are numerous other ways to get your products to those who need and can afford them. The Internet has allowed many companies to sell globally. Going global expands your offering to a larger target market. This can be done through exporting to foreign countries, foreign licensing, and joint ventures. It also involves developing a global strategy. If you have a product that is unique, you may be able to form a strategic alliance with a well-established distributor in another country.

I met an individual who was a U.S. citizen, but had lived in Japan for several years and made some important contacts. His business was to broker deals with U.S. companies who wanted to sell to Japanese customers, but would have a difficult time breaking into the tightly held distribution system already in place. He earned either a percentage of what was sold or was paid a flat fee for his services. His clients benefited by increasing their sales exponentially.

You can also find brokers who will negotiate deals with businesses in numerous other countries that have a demand for what you're selling. In addition, a product that is on the decline side of their product life cycle in the U.S. may experience a renewed demand in countries that are behind the technology curve. For example, it would be next to impossible to make a living selling the older, manual typewriters; however, in some developing countries or places without adequate electricity, they might be a welcome product.

Location can be an extremely important factor to consider when you start your business. With all other factors the same, you may be able to sell much more of your product in one area of the country than in another. This may be due to a larger population or a more affluent community. Brendan and John Ready were two brothers who grew up in a lobster fisherman family in Maine. They learned the trade from their father and would sell their lobsters off the docks, just as other fishermen did. One day they decided to go against tradition and they drove for two hours to sell their lobsters to wealthy customers at Martha's Vineyard. The results were worth the inconvenience of the two-hour drive because they sold all their lobsters and made three times as much revenue as they would have from selling on the dock.

When I lived in Logan, Utah, Kerry was one of my clients who

By RIK VILLEGAS
Special to the Tribune

Rik coaches businesses through their most challenging transition points to develop consistently profitable businesses that operate without them. He can be contacted at RikVillegas@gmail.com, and you can comment on this article at <http://rikv.blogspot.com>.



made his living as a videographer, specializing in wedding videos. His top-end video cost about \$600, and he didn't have much money after paying for his expenses. Within a few months of working with him, Kerry more than doubled his sales, but I told him that if he wanted to make more money he was going to have to move to a larger city. I was thinking of Salt Lake City, but he was even thinking bigger and moved to a retirement community in southern Florida that was much more affluent than Logan. There he was able to sell similar videos he made in Logan, but he charged \$3,000 or more for them. That's five times the amount for the same product. Not only was he able to earn more per client, but there were more clients willing to pay his higher fees. Needless to say, Kerry's sales increased by more than 500 percent and his profits were even greater.

Let's go back to the Ready brothers and their lobster adventure. After graduating from college, they tested a big breakthrough idea they developed in school called *Catch a Piece of Maine*. This was a membership club that planned to sell for about \$3,000 and it included a dedicated lobsterman, your own lobster trap, and a specific number of gourmet lobsters delivered anywhere in the country. It also included other delicacies from Maine, and each shipment included a DVD of your lobsterman showing your catch before it was shipped, as well as a map of where your lobsters were caught and other personalized gifts.

Many people told the brothers that they were crazy, their idea wouldn't work, and no one would buy...until the money started pouring in. The brothers had expanded their idea beyond the docks of Maine to sell to individuals who felt the concept was worth more than the high price. Brendan and John Ready weren't just selling lobsters, they were selling a unique experience that would involve the customers in the lobster catch and turn them into partners by developing a relationship with their lobsterman.

The brothers had a goal to make over \$1 million in their first year by selling 400 memberships at \$3,000. They ended up selling 200 memberships in their first three months and more than 400 in their first year. In addition, they have enthusiastic customers who are compelled to share their adventure with their friends. If a client has a party where the lobsters are served, they can show the DVD and brag about "their" lobsterman in Maine, who caught the meal for them this morning! You can catch their business at www.CatchAPieceOfMaine.com.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Under the missile-toe

So many pieces are moving across the west Pacific chessboard nowadays that it's hard to keep up with them. One item of note is that Australia's navy is cranking up its efforts to defend against anti-ship cruise missiles. Last month the Australian Department of Defense issued a statement saying that eight of their frigates will be upgraded for this purpose. This is just one small piece of a big puzzle: Cruise missiles are going to play a very big role, maybe even a decisive one, in the west Pacific's big game.

And it's not just a concern for advanced navies. In fact, I think the day is coming when anti-ship firepower can be had by places that don't even have meaningful navies at all. How's that for stirring the pot? But before I entertain my notions on that note, let's take a look at just how potent cruise missiles can be.

For example, the United Kingdom's HMS *Sheffield*, a destroyer, was sunk by Argentina in the Falklands war in 1982. It was an air-launched Exocet anti-ship cruise missile that did the deed. Lesson learned? Possibly not. A few years later, in 1987, the USS *Stark*, a frigate, was hit by two Exocets fired from an Iraqi jet, and although the *Stark* didn't sink, 37 sailors were killed.

Well, the '80s are an ancient epoch when it comes to technology, and anti-ship cruise missiles have come a long way since then.

Anti-ship cruise missiles don't have to be launched from jets. They can be launched by just about anything large enough to bolt the missile canister to. For example, you've heard of Mitsubishi, the guys who make cars? Saipan had a Mitsubishi car dealer up until the late '90s. They also make a sporty little anti-ship cruise missile that's launched from a truck not much bigger than my Ford.

Meanwhile, Russia's potent Klub anti-ship missile has been offered in essentially a disguised launch package that looks like a shipping container. I think this story rated more than a mere footnote in the news, not just because of that missile system in specific, but because it illustrates that stealthy deployment of land-based anti-ship missiles is an idea with a lot of merit.

And there are a lot of players in the missile business now. India has a fire-breathing monster of a missile called the BrahMos, which is a joint project with the Russians.

Taiwan and South Korea have developed and deployed anti-ship cruise missiles, and they reportedly have more potent models on the drafting boards. I don't know if South Korea deploys any on land, but I think that Taiwan does.

I haven't done an impressive study on this, or even unimpressive one, but as I take command of my beach chair, waving around my plastic sword as master of all the Pacific waters that I survey, here's what I think: Even a pipsqueak nation, if it's smart enough, could salt its coastal region with enough cruise missiles to give a painful stiff-arm to encroaching ships. This would be more a function of brains, resourcefulness, and diligence than of money.

As for the necessary over-the-horizon targeting of the ships, there are lots of options that anyone could dream up, even for a place that doesn't have a navy at all. Fishing boats, or an ally with satellites, or, these days, maybe some cheap little drones as spotters, could do the trick. It's just a ballpark targeting gig anyway; cruise missiles employ their own terminal guidance radar when it's time for the money shot.

Keep in mind that I'm not saying that cruise missiles are going to make the concept of surface naval forces obsolete. And I'm not

By **ED STEPHENS JR.**
Special to the Tribune

Ed is a pilot, economist, and writer. He holds a degree in economics from UCLA and is a former U.S. naval officer. His column runs every Friday. Visit Ed at TropicalEd.com and SaipanBlog.com.



asserting that any rag-tag place with a few missiles can keep a large enemy fleet at bay for a week, or even for a day.

But I do think that modern land-based anti-ship cruise missiles are small enough, cheap enough and effective enough to provide unprecedented bang for the buck if they are deployed intelligently. Some of the west Pacific's situations seem tailor-made for this sort of creative approach.

I don't read much history, but a book on military matters that made an impression on me was about the battle of Dien Bien Phu, in which the Vietnamese defeated the French (1954). It was the Vietnamese ability to stealthily deploy firepower against a nominally superior enemy that was the crux of the whole affair.

The nautical realm used to hold itself aloof from the muddy indignities of such land-based hi-jinx. But will that always be the case? Sure, the naval advantage still goes to the big, heavy-iron players, but cruise missiles are little and light and that can give them a heck of a sting.

Visit Ed Stephens Jr. at TropicalEd.com. Ed is a pilot, economist, and writer. He holds a degree in economics from UCLA and has been a U.S. naval officer. His column runs every Friday.

Destructive federal laws in NMI

Private industry, the engine of the local economy, has expressed in straightforward fashion its views on the new immigration and federal wage laws, the net effect being business closures and economic collapse and annihilation.

The drastic economic downward spiral is a confirmation of the fallacies inherent in these two federal laws. It was pushed by liberal progressives of Congress, staff, and labor unions without thorough review of the consequences it would inflict on a fragile island economy.

It isn't surprising either that Obama and the liberal movement has a single problem in their leadership: accountability. Obviously, they slammed the two federal laws against the CNMI, mindless of the devastating consequences it now render to both private industries and the working people who get nailed to their cross daily.

Said Bill O'Reilly, host of the *Factor* and author: "There comes a time when the truth must be told. The federal government is not built to run massive entitlement programs or health care or even the U.S. Postal Service, which is now going bankrupt. Washington simply cannot administer 300 million people no matter how much money pours in." I couldn't agree more and my personal gratitude Mr. O'Reilly, for saying it in forthright fashion, too.

As new immigration law removes guest workers, the obvious effect is the paralysis of private industries that have to endure additional fees imposed by new sets of regulations. This right smack in the middle of killer surcharge fees, new imposition from the U.S. Internal Revenue Service on SS deductions for guest workers; and statutory increase in wages that either forces businesses to cut some more or close their doors permanently.

No wonder the late eminent economic Milton Friedman said of politicians, "Give politicians the Sahara Desert and there won't be any sand left in five year's time." Here at home we collectively cringe at the net effects slammed against families by a political decision from Washington that simply failed to consider the economic consequence of ill-conceived federal statutes. It seems the prime movers have been awfully quiet, tiptoeing through alleys in both chambers contented that they never had to live out their ill-conceived decisions. We do!

In Alabama, Republican leadership is scrambling to ease the country's most strict immigration laws. Reason? It has drained private industries of workers, forcing closure that results in far less wealth and jobs creation. A good number of manufacturing businesses have shut down that translates into joblessness and unstable economic future.

The immigration raids conducted against major manufacturers in Iowa also forced the deportation of immigrant workers. When they left, there's no one around to fill specialty jobs in meat packaging firms, etc. It also drained the town of a good number of immigrant workers who used to rent houses for their families and patronize grocery and other businesses. Those who established family businesses just put up shutters and left. The recovery is woefully slow, if at all.

It pays to do a go-slow approach of ridding this island of guest workers. You go from San Antonio through Garapan down to Lower Base. The once beehive of activities has turned empty and silent. Nearly all workers have left leaving behind huge empty buildings that have rusted to waste in recent past. Sad too that most investors have either pulled out or taken a wait-and-see posture, watching if the CNMI could return to a healthy economic level over the next five years. I seriously doubt this could happen by then.

The feds seem to specialize in bankrupting territories by simple imposition of federal laws that instantly kill industries. It has done the same in sterling fashion in Puerto Rico, now nearly a complete nanny territory. Is this the plan for the CNMI too? Liberal progressives may disdain the current administration, but please don't forget that the greater responsibility are the innocent people who must endure the annihilating consequence of your tit for tat gamesmanship! Keep paternalism on your side of the Pacific Divide and allow some room for the exercise of self-government.

Federal Intrusion

There was hope some 33 years ago to foster synergistic working relationship with the feds via the Commission on Federal Laws. This group was tasked to jointly review and approve the application of new federal laws. For some reason, it fizzled out silently. It ended

By **JOHN DELROSARIO**
Special to the Saipan Tribune

DelRosario is a regular contributor to the Saipan Tribune's Opinion Section.



the very idea of refining the new political relationship. It seems it was intended as a temporary tool to appease the CNMI. Subsequently, it turned into a piece of loose trash bouncing off Capital Hill and Pennsylvania Avenue. It's a tale of how the feds view the CNMI from the outset.

The death of the commission prompted some questions, including: Why was it allowed to disappear into thin air? Is it because the feds finally got their gem in terms of land for defense purposes signed, sealed and delivered? Is this why it left two-thirds of Tinian undeveloped for 33 years now? Isn't there a moral obligation to do something to assist the Tinian local economy? Why the wonderful rain dance of negligence and seeming dismissive arrogance? Aren't the folks on Tinian people too, with legitimate economic aspirations? If it isn't developing Tinian, then how about returning the land for economic ventures with foreign investors?

The saddest aspect of this invasive intrusion that should have been handled with kids' gloves is our loss of confidence in the now highly questionable integrity of the feds. An instructive and synergistic working relationship via the commission would have accomplished the goals of both impositions without sending the economy into a titanic tailspin to the bottom. It may be a bit too late to reverse the hands of time.

Definitely, however, there would be a lot of very unhappy campers as they literally struggle to endure the disastrous ruination of the local economy by the two federal laws and a leadership that often finds itself dazed and disoriented or sleepwalking. If it's change for the better with real opportunities on self-government, fine. But change with economic annihilation, sorry Uncles Sam and Ben.

Letter to the Editor

Thank you all

On behalf of the U.S. Pinoys for Good Governance, we would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude and sincere appreciation to those who helped, supported, assisted and collaborated for the success of the humanitarian visit of Atty. Ted Laguatan, a U.S. immigration and human rights lawyer based in San Francisco, California and also the spokesperson and legal counsel of the U.S. Pinoys for Good Governance and

his wife, Mrs. Josephine Laguatan as well as the Immigration Forum that we sponsored and conducted by Atty. Ted Laguatan, that was held on December 8, 2011, at the Marianas Business Plaza lobby. We would like to thank the following:

Attorney Ted Laguatan and Mrs. Josephine Laguatan, attorney Loida Nicolas Lewis, attorney Rodel Rodis, Lt. Gov. Eloy Inos, Senate President Paul A. Manglona, Sen. Ralph Torres, Senate Vice President Jude Hofschneider, Leticia Palacios, Guam Lt. Gov. Ray Tenorio, Alex Gagaring (Guam), Mrs. Andrea Sablan, Philippine Consul General Medardo Macaraig, Philippine Consul Belinda Ante, Remy Lee-Oca of POLO, labor attaché Carmelita Velasquez, OWWA officer Julie Fabian, Philippine Consulate General staff,






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See THANK YOU on Page 13

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
				
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲ 87° ▼ 76°	▲ 87° ▼ 76°	▲ 87° ▼ 76°	▲ 87° ▼ 76°	▲ 87° ▼ 76°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Thundershowers	▲ 85 ▼ 79
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲ 85 ▼ 76
Yap	Showers	▲ 87 ▼ 77
Chuuk	Showers	▲ 85 ▼ 79
Pohnpei	Showers	▲ 84 ▼ 77
Kosrae	Showers	▲ 84 ▼ 77
Majuro	Showers	▲ 85 ▼ 79

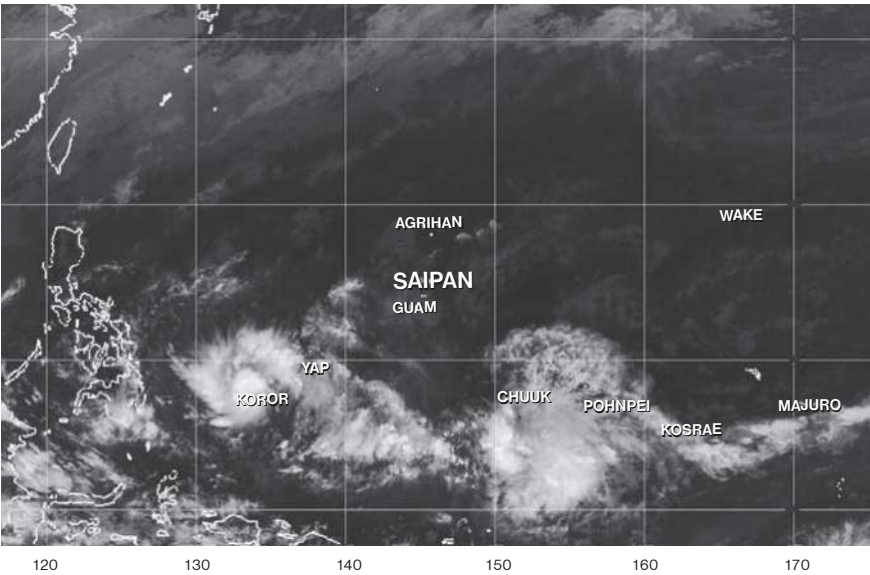
Around The Globe

Auckland	Showers	▲ 69 ▼ 63
Beijing	Sunny	▲ 34 ▼ 17
Hong Kong	Sunny	▲ 65 ▼ 57
Honolulu	Sunny	▲ 81 ▼ 72
London	Mostly Sunny	▲ 41 ▼ 32
Los Angeles	Windy	▲ 66 ▼ 45
Manila	Thundershowers	▲ 82 ▼ 76
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	▲ 86 ▼ 58
Miami	Partly Cloudy	▲ 80 ▼ 69
New York	Partly Cloudy	▲ 47 ▼ 31
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	▲ 48 ▼ 40
Paris	Partly Cloudy	▲ 42 ▼ 34
Pusan	Mostly Sunny	▲ 42 ▼ 26
Rome	Showers	▲ 55 ▼ 38
Salem	Partly Cloudy	▲ 46 ▼ 34
San Francisco	Sunny	▲ 62 ▼ 45
Seoul	Sunny	▲ 29 ▼ 20
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	▲ 32 ▼ 20
Washington, DC	Cloudy	▲ 49 ▼ 35

Tides

Saipan Harbor			
5:09 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.1 Feet
12:14 PM	Today	High Tide:	2.0 Feet
6:27 PM	Today	Low Tide:	1.0 Feet
11:00 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.5 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2011
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Tropical Depression 27W is centered 55 miles west of Koror near 7N134E moving west at 23 mph with maximum sustained winds of 35 mph. Numerous showers and isolated thunderstorms are found near and to the east of the center of 27W between 6N and 11N from 130E to 140E. Low-level convergence east of 27W is generating scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms southeast of Yap between 3N and 6N from 137E to 147E. For more detailed information on Tropical Depression 27W, see bulletins issued by the Joint Typhoon Warning Center under WMO header WTPN32 PGTW and by National Weather Service Guam under WMO header WTPQ32 PGUM. A tropical disturbance south of Chuuk and Pohnpei is generating numerous showers and isolated thunderstorms between 1N and 8N from 150E to 160E. Trade-wind convergence is triggering scattered showers near Kosrae and the southern Marshall Islands within 110 miles of a line from 3N160E to 7N180E. A shear line extends from 25N140E to 22N130E. Low clouds and showers can be found along and up to 300 mile north of the boundary. Another shear line extends from 24N180 to 22N162E to 25N160E. Low clouds and showers can be found along and up to 100 mile north of the boundary.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:35 AM	5:49 PM
Saturday	6:36 AM	5:50 PM
Sunday	6:36 AM	5:50 PM
Monday	6:37 AM	5:51 PM
Tuesday	6:37 AM	5:51 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	10:53 PM	10:41 AM
Saturday	11:47 PM	11:24 AM
Sunday		12:06 PM
Monday	12:43 AM	12:50 PM
Tuesday	1:41 AM	1:38 PM

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Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- **BIRTHDAY GREETINGS**
A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- **BUSINESS**
Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- **SAMUT SARI**
Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- **TRAVELOGUE**
Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **COMMUNITY BRIEFS**

Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.

CAMPUS BULLETIN

Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

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- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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 - Fax: (670) 235-3740
 - Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
 - Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
- To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 6, 2011

DEPARTURES	ARRIVALS
GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP) C05062 2:10am 2:40am 1, 5	ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM) C05064 5:15am 5:45am 1, 5
SAIPAN (SPN)-ROTA (ROP) C05064 4:15am 4:50am 1, 5	ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN (SPN) C05062 3:10am 3:45am 1, 5
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM) C05070 4:15am 5:45am 1, 5 via ROP C05070 4:35am 5:25am 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 C05068 8:25am 9:15am Daily C05074 12:10pm 1:00pm 1, 4, 5, 7 C05076 3:10pm 4:00pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05078 6:50pm 7:40pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05078 7:00pm 7:50pm 3, 6 C05072 9:55pm 10:45pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05072 10:05pm 10:55pm 3, 6	GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN C05062 2:10am 3:45am 1, 5 via ROP C05069 2:45am 3:35am 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 C05071 7:00am 7:50am Daily C05073 10:05am 10:55am 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05075 1:40pm 2:30pm 1, 4, 5, 7 C05077 5:30pm 6:20pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05077 5:40pm 6:30pm 3, 6 C05079 8:35pm 9:25pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05079 8:45pm 9:35pm 3, 6
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT) DL287 6:00am 8:35am Daily DL297 4:35pm 7:20pm Daily	NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN DL298 10:25am 3:00pm Daily DL288 8:40pm 1:15am+1 Daily
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN) OZ606 2:10am 6:00am 1 OZ606 2:40am 6:30am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 OZ604 3:20pm 7:10pm Daily	SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN OZ603 9:00am 2:20pm Daily OZ605 7:40pm 1:00am+1 7 OZ605 8:10pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS) OZ608 3:35am 7:05am 4, 7	BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN OZ607 9:00pm 2:20am+1 3, 6
SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN) 3U8646 4:20am 7:30am 2, 6	GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN 3U8645 7:40pm 3:00am+1 1, 5
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG) 3U8648 6:10am 8:40am 1, 4, 5, 7	SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN 3U8647 10:40pm 5:00am+1 3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL) OZ606/701 2:10am 11:15am 1 via ICN OZ606/701 2:40am 11:15am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN C05070/191 4:35am 9:45am 3, 6 via GUM DL287/173 6:00am 10:25pm Daily via NRT C05068/183 8:25am 9:25pm 2, 5 via GUM C05068/183 8:25am 9:40pm 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM C05076/183 3:10pm 9:25pm 2, 5 via GUM C05076/183 3:10pm 9:40pm 1, 4, 7 via GUM C05076/193 3:10pm 11:00pm 2, 5 via GUM-Palau OZ604/703 3:20pm 11:00pm Daily via ICN C05072/PR111 9:55pm 7:50am+1 1, 5, 7 via GUM C05072/PR111 10:05pm 7:50am+1 3, 6 via GUM	MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN OZ704/603 12:10am 2:20pm Daily via ICN DL172/288 8:00am 1:15am+1 Daily via NRT C0190/5077 10:55am 6:30pm 3, 6 via GUM C0190/5079 10:55am 9:35pm 3, 6 via GUM OZ702/605 12:30pm 1:00am+1 7 via ICN OZ702/605 12:30pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN PR110/C05071 10:15pm 7:50am+1 1, 5, 7 via GUM C0192/5071 10:25pm 7:50am+1 2, 5 via GUM-Palau C0184/5071 11:10pm 7:50am+1 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM C0184/5071 11:59pm 7:50am+1 2, 5 via GUM
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG) OZ606/721 2:10am 12:00pm 1 via ICN OZ606/721 2:40am 12:00pm 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN C05076/179 3:10pm 10:25pm 1, 5 via GUM OZ604/723 3:20pm 10:30pm Daily via ICN OZ604/749 3:20pm 11:00pm 1, 3, 5, 7 via ICN	HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN OZ724/603 12:30am 2:20pm Daily via ICN OZ750/603 1:10am 2:20pm 1, 2, 4, 6 via ICN OZ722/605 1:15pm 1:00am+1 7 via ICN OZ722/605 1:15pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN C0180/5071 11:15pm 7:50am+1 1, 5 via GUM
LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 5K: FlyGuam; 3U: Sichuan Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana	
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The <i>Saipan Tribune</i> is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)	

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily	FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily	FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
Guam-Rota				FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily	FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan							
FRE 1750	17:50	18:20	Daily	Tinian-Saipan			
Saipan-Rota				FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily	FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily	FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily	FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
Saipan-Tinian				FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily	FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily	FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily	FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily	FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily	FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily	FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Letters to the Editor

Kudos to sponsors

Even though the economy is bad at this time, there are certain companies and individuals that were still considerate and were able to donate money to me so that I could go to Guam and compete in the Thanksgiving Hoops Fest tournament for the G-Rollers team.

Going to Guam with the Rollers team was a great experience for me and my teammates. We were able to bring home the championship trophy. On behalf of the Rollers family, I would like to thank the people who helped sponsor and to the family members who supported us all the way. I would like to sincerely thank the following businesses and individuals for their support. Thank you and Merry Christmas!

The sponsors are the following: San Roque Market, C-Market, Grand market, Auto Marine, Twins 2 Supermarket, New Times

Store, QQ Car Rental, Mamas Store, Aneis Imuzu, Star Jewelry, L&Q Corporation, Lab Tech, Chang Ming Market, LJ's 2, Happy Market Garapan, Happy Market Garapan, Happy Market As Lito, Lyn's BBQ, Kinpachi Restaurant, D' Elegance, Manacop & Enriquez family, Andon Matsumoto & family, Sachiko Mafinas, Nixon Clemente, Alpog (Megavision), Darlene Macaranas, Ailene Benavidez, Raquel Garcia, Jackie Payopay, Chiello Sayas, Donna Fronda, Maryann Calejo, Huang Jun, Ray Dela Cruz, Santiago Borja, Jocelyn Itibus, Mr. Zietzki, Mr. O'Harnett, Sunny, Guy, Tibo, Vince, Ying Arenan, Glen Perez, Joven Cruz, and Dave Muna.

Jun Christopher Fidelino
G-Rollers member

the Global Filipinos in Diaspora Council, all Filipinos and foreign workers in the CNMI and the people of the CNMI.

Maraming salamat po, si yu'us maase, and thank you very much.

Dr. Celia B. Lamkin
President, USP4GG President (Marianas Chapter)
and Guam-CNMI USP4GG Representative

THANK YOU

From Page 11

Editha Villanueva, Eduel Necesito, Mildred Pabilando, Manolito Basa, Rebecca Flores, Filipino Community of Guam, Director Leahbeth Naholowaa (Guam), Dr. Meilou Milligan (Guam), Eddie Sy (Guam), CREAM, all members of the USP4GG, all members of

We're living in a stressful and scary land

CNMI residents are either stressed or are in fear. We have so many problems and we don't have the manpower to fix it. So many years have gone by and still nothing has succeeded. Our educational institutions are struggling for help to get accredited and no one knows how to fix it. The coffers are always empty and all of our living necessities are going to be gone soon. Or should I say out of stock.

The Retirement Fund is in grave danger and not everyone understands it. Many think withdrawal is the better than nothing at all, but in reality someone needs to explain to them that what they are taking is like a one-year salary, compared to the lifetime that others retirees are enjoying now. Those who are waiting to retire cannot retire because the government didn't pay their contribution and there is nothing we can do to get it, and some are in fear of losing everything that they too are waiting for that public law to withdraw and save their money someplace else until such time these problem is fixed.

The labor and immigration issue is another scary problem that we have. Those who are still waiting for their status who have U.S. citizen children and spouses desperately need our help and no one knows how to do that. Now their lawyers and experts are here informing us of their capacity to rule, and what they can do in the future. What's more scary is that they were once our friends but now

See LIVING on Page 14

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Thank you and Happy Holidays!

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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Tanapag Elementary School PTSA meeting on Dec. 19

Tanapag Elementary School will be having a PSTA meeting on Dec. 19, 5:30pm in their cafeteria. For more information, call the main office at 664-3425, 26, 27.

Great holiday gift: Disease-free banana seedlings

Guam Department of Agriculture in partnership with the University of Guam Plant Pathology Laboratory is offering a holiday discount on two varieties of tissue-cultured bananas.

Enjoy a 50 percent discount on the popular Williams (a.k.a. Chiquita, which are early producers of high quality fruit) and Guahu (dwarf version of Williams).

Plants are available at the Guam Department of Agri-

culture during business hours.

For more information, call Ric Lizama at 734-3946. (PR)

More bunelus dagu and eskabechi lessons

The Inetnon Amot yan Kutturán Natibu/Mwiischil Safey me Kkoor Aramasal Faluw is offering free lessons to Chamorros and Carolinians on making *bunelos dagu* and *eskabechi* at the Saipan Chamorro-Carolinian Village Cultural Centers Headquarters (1213 Capitol Hill Rd, across from the Workforce Investment Agency and next to the CNMI Board of Parole Office) this Saturday, Dec. 17, 2011.

The lessons will be from 9:30am to 12noon. There will also be pre-mixed bunelos dagu bags, for sale at \$10 per 5-lb bag, as well as new Chamorro Christmas

songs CDs for sale on Saturday. Participants are also encouraged to bring a small dish (potluck) to share with other participants in celebration of the Christmas spirit.

This Saturday's activities at the Rota Chamorro Village Cultural Center (in the DCCA office compound) include making coconut leis, bayogu panda bear doll, bagoyu ant doll, and coconut shell bracelet with Plumeria design. The lessons on Rota start at 10am.

These activities are offered by the Association of Native Medicine and Culture, in partnership with the Indigenous Affairs Office (Saipan) and the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs Office (Rota), and funded in part by the Administration for Native Americans. For more information, call 322-0278 on Saipan and 286-5562 on Rota. (PR)

LIVING

From Page 13

it seems like we are strangers to each other. We used to help each other and work together. Now they are strangers and we don't know what they might do next.

Our hospital is now in the hands of another authority where everything has to be paid, and many of us have lost our health insurance in order to be able to afford living and paying for obligations. Yes, there is Medicaid, but not all are eligible. On Tinian we don't have doctors and to get one we need to fly to the Saipan hospital, which has limited services. Those who can afford it fly to Guam.

The Public School System have a curriculum that is accredited but not applicable to our way of living, which demand that parents go school or take a workshop in order to understand them. Many important life skills are

not included and parents have to manage our children's well-being to meet their educational needs.

There are a lot of gambling addicted families that need professional help but are scared to seek help in fear of losing their reputation and the trust and respect of others. This is a sad and scary issue that many of us don't see as a threat to our social and general welfare.

Our leaders needs professional assistance on how to make laws that apply to our community's needs. Ask the feds to show us how to do the work, how to make money, and how can we improve ourselves to be able to comply with their requirements.

Fish and Wildlife and the Environmental Protection Agency need to help show us how to protect our environment. Educate us on what laws we can implement to prevent extinction and protect the fishes in our reefs, coconut crabs, and important habitats.

These drugs issue is growing and I haven't heard anything being done yet to help us. Juvenile delinquency

issues, I haven't heard of any reliable programs in place to help them once they are out of detention. Those who are seeking employment are struggling to get one and there is no one to help so they end up doing the same thing again.

What's going to happen to us when we get old? Are our children ready to help us? What will happen to us should other U.S. citizens rule over us? I'm worried about what will happen in two years after this takeover finishes its task here. I'm worried about what will happen to us should these contract workers leave or get deported. I'm worried about the problems that might arise after, what impact it will cost us.

What's more scary is that some leaders who are desperate are making decisions without thinking of the consequences of their decisions.

Winnie Atalig,
San Jose Village, Tinian

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NIMO hosts Christmas party, hails top employee

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Northern Islands Mayor's Office hosted Thursday a Christmas party for its employees as an appreciation for their hard work and contribution this 2011.

NIMO staffers and guests enjoyed barbecue and other local fares at the Capitol Hill office.

Mayor Tobias Aldan said yesterday's party was also a chance to hand out gifts and prizes to those who were awarded Employee of the Month this year.

They were Patrick C. Santos (January), Francisco L. Kaipat (February, November), Francisco Jerome K. Aldan (March, December), Jeromy R. Topulei (April), Jesus C. Santos (May), Santiago Fitiopol Castro (June), Lerins Stoll (July), Vicente Lairope Mettao

(August), Lee Michael Olaitman Sylvan (September), and Robin O. Kaipat (October).

The awardees were recognized for being persistent in completing assignments despite degree of difficulties, demonstrating good work habits, displaying leadership qualities, and working beyond the call of duty.

Aldan said the awards serve as an incentive and a way to boost the morale of the staff. The awardees were given certificates signed by the mayor.

The awardees also received gift packs and gift certificates donated by various local businesses, including Coca-Cola, Marpac, J's Restaurant, Marianas Resort, McDonald's, Country House Restaurant, Hyatt Regency Saipan, and Tan Siu Lin Foundation.

During yesterday's event, the mayor also presented the

Employee of the Year award to Francisco L. Kaipat for his distinguished and exemplary performance throughout the year.

"You are being commended for your leadership, contributions, and achievements in providing quality services to the Northern Islands community and the CNMI," read the certificate signed by Aldan and Gov. Benigno R. Fitial.

Kaipat, who has been with the NIMO for two years, said he didn't expect to receive the award because all the staff are hardworking employees.

"It's a good Christmas gift for me," said Kaipat, the community worker assigned to Alamagan, who received gift certificates for two at Coral Ocean Point, Saipan Grand Hotel, Fiesta Resort & Spa, Hafa Adai Beach Hotel, and Saipan Grand Hotel.

A father of five, Kaipat said

doing his job is easy to do with the help of Aldan and the NIMO staff.

"Teamwork helps a lot. I believe I also have commit-

ment for my job. We plan to continue with our work next year to help the residents of the Northern Islands," Kaipat told *Saipan Tribune*.

Asked for his Christmas wish, Kaipat said, "My wish is for everybody to be safe during

the holidays."

The mayor congratulated Kaipat and the rest of the NIMO staff for a job well done in 2011.

"Keep up the good work. Merry Christmas and have a wonderful 2012. God bless us all," said Aldan.








CLARISSA V. DAVID

Northern Islands Mayor Tobias Aldan, standing right, is joined by his staffers for a group photo during their Christmas party at their office yesterday. With him are, back row from left, Francisco L. Kaipat, Jesus C. Santos, Francisco Jerome K. Aldan, and Jeromy R. Topulei; front row from left, Lee Robin Kaipat and Vicente Lairope Mettao. Not in photo are staffers Sandy Castro and Lerins Stoll.

How do I know I'm pregnant?

Most women don't suspect they are pregnant until they miss a period, and a few don't suspect or believe they are pregnant for months after conception. During this time you are missing valuable prenatal care.

Here are 5 common early signs of pregnancy. You may experience all, some, or none of these symptoms.

-  **Missed Period:** Missing your period is the most noticeable sign of pregnancy. But it is not the only cause, as stress or other factors may cause irregular periods.
-  **Frequent Trips to the Bathroom:** Even before missing a period, most pregnant women report having to go to the bathroom more often.
-  **Fatigue:** Being tired is a very early sign of pregnancy.
-  **Morning (and Noon and Night!) Sickness:** That queasy feeling isn't limited to mornings. Most pregnant women who experience morning sickness feel slightly nauseated and may have vomiting at other times during the day as well.
-  **Sore (and Enlarged) Breasts:** If you're pregnant, your breasts may become tender to the touch, similar to the way they feel before your period, only more so.

If you have any of the above symptoms or suspect you are pregnant, come to the clinic for a pregnancy test as soon as possible! Don't wait!

PRENATAL CARE: Because You Care Healthy Mom & Healthy Baby



For more information or to schedule an appointment with a provider call:
CHC Women's Clinic **234-8950** ext: **3503**
Tinian Health Center **433-9263**
Rota Health Center **532-9461**

Did you know Medicaid covers all prenatal care costs-visits with provider, lab tests, ultrasound, and more?
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Information adapted from WebMD.com

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NMC to host free information sessions on Jan. 4, 5

The Northern Marianas College will be hosting two free information sessions on Jan. 4 and 5, 2012.

The first information session, which is open to prospective students and all interested community members, is on Wednesday, Jan. 4, 2012, from 5:30pm to 6:30pm in Room D-1 at the college's As Terlaje campus. The next information session, which is for government and private sector employees, is on Thursday, Jan. 5, 2012, from 5:30pm to 6:30pm in Room D-1.

Individuals within the community, as well as government and private sector employees, interested in furthering their education and advancing their professional

careers are encouraged to attend these events.

Faculty, staff, and students from the different degree and certificate programs at NMC, as well as Student Services representatives from counseling, financial aid, and admissions will be on hand to answer questions. Other current students will also be speaking about their experiences at NMC.

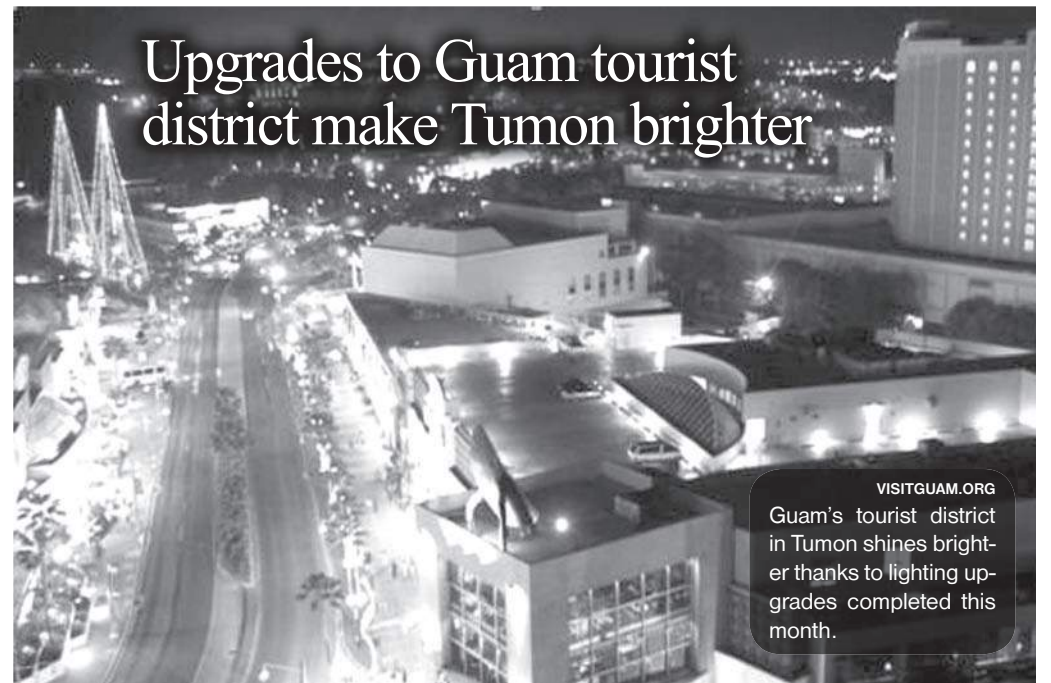
Those who attend the free information session will also qualify to have their application fee and their placement test fees waived for the upcoming spring 2012 semester. This represents a savings of about \$50. Registration for the spring 2012 semester will begin on Monday, Jan. 9, 2012.

NMC offers several degree

and certificate programs, including a bachelor of science degree in education (emphasis on elementary education, early childhood education, special education, or rehabilitation and human services), associate degrees in business, business administration (emphasis on accounting, business management, or computer applications), liberal arts, nursing, natural resources management, criminal justice, and hospitality management. Moreover, it offers short-term certificate programs in different vocational, academic, and professional areas.

For more information, contact the Office of Admissions and Records at 234-5498 ext. 1537, or log on to www.nmcnet.edu. (NMC)

Upgrades to Guam tourist district make Tumon brighter



TUMON, Guam—The Guam Power Authority announced the completion of its Tumon Lighting Project on Dec. 7, 2011. The agency installed energy-efficient lighting for the island's tourism capital. In addition to making the area safer, visitors can continue to enjoy Guam's pleasant evenings and exciting nightlife along the tourist strip.

GPA, along with contractor Johnson Controls Inc., conducted a retrofit upgrade of one-to-one replacement to energy-efficient technology lighting along Pale San Vitores Road in Tumon. The project spanned five weeks from October to November with 520 lighting fixtures being replaced.

The brighter lights can be seen between the GVB office and the Westin Resort Guam. The efforts of utilizing higher efficiency lighting in order to maximize cost savings is a joint government of Guam project involving the Department of Public Works, Governor's Office, Guam Energy Office, GVB, and GPA.

According to GPA communications manager, Artemio Perez, the use of the higher-efficiency technology equates to a 54 percent reduction in energy over the use of the old lighting technology. In a press release, Flores stated that GovGuam will realize approximately \$3 million in fuel savings annually on the project alone.

"Not having ample lighting in our tourism district was of great concern to GVB," general manager Joann Camacho said, "We are pleased with the replacement of all streetlights that will keep our visitors and patrons safe. We also thank our partners Guam Power Authority, Guam Energy Office, Department of Public Works, and Johnson Controls for making this a top priority and congratulate them for bringing this to reality."

With evening temperatures hovering around 78 degrees, the Tumon area is now even more attractive to visitors who like to shop, dine, and be entertained into the night. (GVB)

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Business

Congress weighing length of jobless benefits

WASHINGTON (AP)—Is there any downside to extending federal jobless benefits, as Congress is about to do? The benefits are a crucial lifeline to the long-time unemployed. But they also

can be a disincentive to looking for work and prolong joblessness, economists say, as lawmakers weigh shortening them.

If Congress does nothing, the current law that provides

federal benefits to augment state assistance that last for only 26 weeks will expire at the end of this month. As a result, more than a million out-of-work Americans could lose

their benefits in January, and a total of five million could lose them by year's end.

In states with high or rising unemployment, the ceiling on federal and state benefits combined is now 99 weeks. The Republican-led House has passed a bill that extends the coverage but gradually reduces it by 20 weeks by mid-2012. An improving job market could reduce eligibility for extended benefits by another

20 weeks in some of those states, making the new effective ceiling 59 weeks.

At the heart of the controversy is something economists and politicians have long debated. Conservatives argue that prolonging government assistance to the unemployed can discourage active job searching so long as it lasts, keeping jobless rates higher than they would be if aid were ended.

Supporters of a full new extension, including President Barack Obama and most congressional Democrats, argue

that these are unusually dire times and that jobs are harder to find than after run-of-the-mill recessions. Therefore, additional aid is warranted and can contribute directly to economic growth, they say.

Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody's Analytics, backs the full extension because "it is needed and necessary given the stress in the labor market." "But this is not a slam-dunk positive," Zandi said. "There is something to the argument that the length of unemployment benefits creates disincentives to work."

Democrats may drop millionaires tax in year-end dispute

WASHINGTON (AP)—Democrats may jettison their demand for higher taxes on millionaires as part of legislation to extend Social Security tax cuts for most Americans, officials said Wednesday as President Barack Obama and Congress struggled to clear critical year-end bills without triggering a partial government shutdown.

Republicans, too, signaled an eagerness to avoid gridlock and adjourn for the holidays. With a massive, \$1 trillion funding bill blocked by Democrats, GOP lawmakers and aides floated the possibility of a backup measure to keep the government in operation for several days after the money runs out Friday night.

It all comes at the close of a year of divided government—with a tea party-flavored majority in the House and Obama's allies in the Senate—that has veered from near-catastrophe to last-minute compromise repeatedly since last January.

The rhetoric Wednesday was biting at times. "We have fiddled all year long, all year," the Republican leader, Sen. Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, complained in a less-than-harmoni-

ous exchange on the Senate floor with Majority Leader Harry Reid. McConnell accused Democrats of "routinely setting up votes designed to divide us ... to give the president a talking point out on the campaign trail."

Reid shot back that McConnell had long ago declared Obama's defeat to be his top priority. And he warned that unless Republicans show a willingness to bend, the country faces a government shutdown "that will be just as unpopular" as the two that occurred when Newt Gingrich was House speaker more than a decade ago.

It was a reminder—as if McConnell and current Speaker John Boehner of Ohio needed one—of the political debacle that ensued for Republicans when Gingrich was outmaneuvered in a showdown with former President Bill Clinton.

At issue now are three year-end bills that Obama and leaders in both parties in Congress say they want. One would extend expiring Social Security payroll tax cuts and benefits for the long-term unemployed, provisions at the heart of Obama's jobs program. Another is the \$1 trillion spending measure that would lock in cuts that Republicans won earlier in the year. The third measure is a \$662 billion defense bill setting policy for military personnel, weapons systems and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, plus national security programs in the Energy Department.

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Saturdays include:
-Morning Educational Trips: Museum Tour, Fire Station, American Memorial Park, etc.
-Afternoon Fun trips such as going to PIC Water Park, Jungle Wave, Jungle Trekking, Managaha and many more!

Nation

Could US drivers ever abide by cellphone ban?

DALLAS (AP)—Junior Woods has a well-practiced routine for conducting business on the road: While driving through-out rural Arkansas, the electronics salesman steals a glance at his cellphone every so often, checking for text messages and emails.

"I can keep both hands on the steering wheel and just look down my nose and read in 10-second intervals," Woods said in a phone interview from Rogers, Ark. "I'm actually doing that right now."

Like millions of other Americans, Woods uses his car as a mobile office, relying on his phone almost every hour of every

workday to stay productive and earn a living. So would drivers ever abide by a proposed ban on almost all cellphone use behind the wheel, even if it is hands-free? Could they afford to?

Those are just a few of the questions looming over a federal recommendation that seeks to rein in what has become an essential tool of American business.

Woods said the ban, if adopted, would devastate his sales. Because he lives in a rural state, his minimum drive is an hour and a half.

"If I have a 3 1/2-hour drive to Little Rock, and I've got 100 messages to return, it's going to turn that into a six-

hour drive," he said. "I've got no secretary. I'm the administrative assistant. I'm the salesman. I'm the sales director."

The National Transportation Safety Board declared Tuesday that texting, emailing or chatting while driving is just too dangerous to be allowed anywhere in the United States. It urged all states to impose total bans except for emergencies.

The NTSB, an independent agency that investigates accidents and makes safety recommendations, doesn't have the power to impose regulations or make grants. But its suggestions carry significant weight with lawmakers and regulators.

Survey: 1 in 4 women attacked by intimate partner

ATLANTA (AP)—It's a startling number: 1 in 4 women surveyed by the government say they were violently attacked by their husbands or boyfriends.

Experts in domestic violence don't find it too surprising, although some aspects of the survey may have led to higher numbers than are sometimes reported.

Even so, a government official who oversaw the research called the results "astounding."

"It's the first time we've had this kind of estimate" on the

prevalence of intimate partner violence, said Linda Degutis of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The survey, released by the CDC Wednesday, marks the beginning of a new annual project to look at how many women say they've been abused.

One expert called the new report's estimate on rape and attempted rape "extremely high"—with 1 in 5 women saying they were victims. About half of those cases involved intimate partners. No documen-

tation was sought to verify the women's claims, which were made anonymously.

But advocates say the new rape numbers are plausible.

"It's a major problem that often is underestimated and overlooked," said Linda James, director of health for Futures Without Violence, a San Francisco-based organization that advocates against domestic abuse.

The CDC report is based on a randomized telephone survey of about 9,000 women and 7,400 men.

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Asia

Impeached judge warns of Philippine 'dictatorship'

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The chief justice of the Philippine Supreme Court warned Wednesday that President Benigno Aquino III's moves to oust him could lead to a dictatorship and vowed to defend himself in an impeachment trial.

Chief Justice Renato Corona accused Aquino of seeking to

impose his will on the court to control the entire government.

It was Corona's most scathing public statement against Aquino after the House of Representatives impeached the chief justice Monday for alleged corruption and decisions favoring ex-President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, who is detained

on election fraud charges.

A spokesman for the president objected to Corona's dictatorship comment, pointing out that the president's opposition leader father was assassinated during the rule of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

Corona spoke with his wife at this side surrounded by sev-

eral members of the 15-member bench and black-clad court employees and hundreds of supporters, including lawyers and judges who declared a "court holiday" to show solidarity with the beleaguered chief justice.

Aquino has called the Corona-led court a stumbling block to his administration's anti-corruption campaign.

"If this impeachment succeeds, what do you think will happen?" Corona said in a

speech on the steps of the Supreme Court building. "Very simple, my beloved countrymen—Mr. Aquino already has his Cabinet, he controls Congress and he will have the Supreme Court in his hands."

"What he is sowing will surely yield a dictatorship—a dictatorship that results from deception and the poisoning of the minds of the people," Corona said. "I will resist the emerging dictatorship of President Benigno Simeon Aquino III."

The impeachment complaint against Corona was signed by 188 members of the House of Representatives, which is dominated by allies of Aquino.

Senators convened themselves as the impeachment court in brief ceremonies after Corona's speech. They gave Corona 10 days to answer the charges and will reconvene on Jan. 16.

Among other allegations, the impeachment complaint accuses the Corona-led court of ruling improperly in Arroyo's favor when they allowed her to leave the country last month before she was arrested.



Corona

Papua New Guinea deadlocked over rival leaders

PORT MORESBY, Papua New Guinea (AP)—Papua New Guinea politics were deadlocked Thursday, with two men claiming to be prime minister, two governments saying they hold power, rival police chiefs maintaining the peace—and no one sure who actually was in charge.

The power struggle in the most populous South Pacific island nation has exasperated the public and prompted union leaders to call on both men claiming to be prime minister to find a solution before the situation worsens.

The country's Supreme Court and Governor-General Sir Michael Ogio have backed 76-year-old Sir Michael Somare, who the court ruled was illegally removed as prime minister while getting medical treatment outside the country. But lawmakers loyal to his rival Peter O'Neill have passed retroactive legislation recognizing him as leader.

At a press conference Thursday, O'Neill said he had ordered police to take control of government offices, including the prime minister's office, where Somare and his followers were working. But O'Neill said he had no authority to issue arrest warrants for Somare or Somare's ministers.

Somare's spokeswoman did

not immediately respond to a request for comment. Somare had been scheduled to hold a press conference earlier Thursday, but it was delayed without explanation.

"We are sick and tired of the selfish behavior by our politicians," said Michael Malabang, head of the country's Trade Union Congress, which represents tens of thousands of private and public sector workers across Papua New Guinea, a former Australian territory rich in mineral resources. "We don't want a total public service breakdown, and it is coming to that stage."

The standoff began Monday, when the Supreme Court ruled that O'Neill's election by parliament in August was unconstitutional and said Somare should be reinstated as prime minister. Lawmakers backing O'Neill stormed the gates of Ogio's official residence on Tuesday, demanding he meet with O'Neill. Ogio, who represents British Queen Elizabeth II—the country's head of state—said he'd decide by Wednesday who should be prime minister.

On Wednesday, Ogio swore in Somare's Cabinet. Somare insisted he did not need to be sworn in, because the Supreme Court had already reinstated him as prime minister.

But a majority of the coun-

try's 109 lawmakers voted later Wednesday to suspend Ogio and replace him temporarily with Speaker Jeffery Nape. Nape then swore O'Neill in as prime minister.

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 - Laundry facility
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ASIAN BRIEFS

Philippines launches warship amid territorial row

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The Philippines relaunched an old U.S. Coast Guard cutter Wednesday as its biggest and most modern warship to guard potentially oil-rich waters that are at the center of a dispute with China. President Benigno Aquino III witnessed the commissioning of the 3,390-ton Philippine navy frigate BRP Gregorio del Pilar in an austere Manila pier ceremony that he said symbolized his country's struggle to modernize its underfunded military despite many obstacles.

Pakistan president discharged from hospital

ISLAMABAD (AP)—Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari was discharged from a hospital in Dubai late Wednesday, and will stay in his house in the Gulf state before returning home, his spokesman said. Farhatullah Babar couldn't say when Zardari would fly to Pakistan, but expressed "no doubt" that he would do so. He said he was not sure whether doctors had given the 56-year-old leader permission to travel yet.

Gibbon attacks 2 children in Malaysia zoo escape

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP)—A gibbon attacked two children, including one who was seriously injured, after escaping from an enclosure at a zoo in southern Malaysia, an official said Thursday. The male siamang first bit a 5-year-old girl on her ankle Tuesday, Malacca Zoo director Ahmad Azhar Mohammed said. Minutes later, the ape attacked a 3-year-old boy and ripped off part of his right thigh, he said. The girl received outpatient treatment, but the boy, Muhammad Afiq Haziq, was hospitalized in serious condition, the zoo director said.

BRUCE L. MAILMAN, #F0153
MAILMAN & KARA, LLC
PMB 238 PPP, Box 10,000
Saipan, MP 96950-8900
Telephone: 233-0081
Facsimile: 233-0090

ATTORNEYS FOR PLAINTIFF
WELLS FARGO FINANCIAL, INC.

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN
MARIANA ISLANDS

WELLS FARGO FINANCIAL, INC. Plaintiff,	CIVIL ACTION NO. 11-0295
-v-	COMPLAINT
FRANCISCO E. SANTOS, Defendant.	

1. Jurisdiction of this matter is vested in this Honorable Court by virtue of Commonwealth Const. Art. 4, Sec. 2, and by virtue of the provisions of Section 3202 of the Commonwealth Judicial Reorganization Act of 1989.
2. Plaintiff is Wells Fargo Financial, Inc., a corporation licensed to transact the business of financing within the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.
3. Defendant Francisco E. Santos is a United States citizen and a person of Northern Marianas descent residing at Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands.
4. On or about August 9, 2007 defendant executed a Promissory Note ("the Note") in favor of plaintiff in the amount of \$35,873.82, plus interest at 8.63% per annum. A true and correct copy of the Note is attached hereto as Exhibit A and incorporated by this reference.
5. The Note was secured by a Real Property Mortgage ("the Mortgage"), executed by defendant on August 9, 2007, and recorded on the same day as file no. 07-1755 at the office of the Commonwealth Recorder, a true and correct copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit B and incorporated by this reference. The Mortgage secured repayment of the Note and pledged to Plaintiff the following real property located at Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, known as Lot 373-3-5-1, which is more particularly described in the Mortgage as:
- LOT 373-3-5-1 (FORMERLY PART OF LOT 373-3-5, WHICH WAS PART OF LOT 373-3, WHICH WAS PART OF LOT 373, TD 151), as more particularly described on Drawing/Cadastral Plat No. 2059/06, the original of which was recorded on June 9, 2006 as Document No. 06-1424 at the office of the Commonwealth Recorder's, Saipan.
6. Defendant is in default on the Note, in that he has not made all the payments provided for therein to be made.
7. On or about August 18, 2011 plaintiff, through counsel, dispatched notice of default of the note to Mr. Santos by US Postal Service certified mail, return receipt requested. The notice of default was in both the English and Chamorro languages. A true and correct copy of the notice of default in both languages, with the return receipt dated September 20, 2011, are attached hereto collectively as Exhibit C and incorporated by this reference.
8. Pursuant to the terms of the Note and the provisions of 2 CMC §4534(d), the entire outstanding principal balance of the loan is now due and owing by defendant to plaintiff, together with interest, as follows:
- Outstanding principal balance: \$ 31,310.63
Amount due for interest through 10/31/2011: \$ 1,733.85
Daily accruing interest from and after 11/1/2011: \$ 7.51
- Daily accruing interest is calculated by the formula $(\$33,244.48 \times 8.63\%) / 365$.
9. Pursuant to the terms and conditions of the Note and the Mortgage, defendant is additionally obligated to plaintiff for reasonable attorney's fees and costs incurred in collection of the Note and prosecution of the herein complaint, in amounts as yet undetermined but still accruing.
10. Notwithstanding demand, Mr. Santos has failed, refused and neglected, and still fails, refuses and neglects to pay the amounts due to plaintiff.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, plaintiff prays for judgment against defendant, as follows:

(A) Against defendant Francisco E. Santos, the principal sum of \$31,310.63; plus accrued interest at the rate of 8.63% per annum to October 31, 2011 in the amount of \$1,733.85; plus accrued interest thereon at the rate of 8.63% per annum from and after November 1, 2011, in the amount of \$7.51 per day;

(B) Against defendant Francisco E. Santos, for reasonable attorney's fees and costs of suit; and for other costs allowed pursuant to the terms of the Note and the Mortgage;

(C) Against defendant Francisco E. Santos, for interest on the total of all amounts included in the judgment sought by this complaint, at the maximum rate provided by law from the date of judgment;

(D) Against defendant Francisco E. Santos, ordering that if the judgment is not paid in full within three months after its date, Lot 373-3-5-1 shall be sold in accordance with law and the proceeds of said sale, after deducting expenses thereof, shall be applied to payment of the balance due upon judgment, and for reasonable attorney's fees and costs of suit, and other costs allowed by the Note and the Mortgage; and

(E) For such other and further relief as the Court deems proper.

DATED, this 31ST day of October, 2011.

Respectfully submitted,

MAILMAN & KARA, LLC
/s/ BRUCE L. MAILMAN, F0153
Attorney for Plaintiff
WELLS FARGO FINANCIAL, INC.

World

Syrian activists say more than 25 killed

BEIRUT (AP)—Violence across Syria killed at least 25 people Wednesday, including eight soldiers who were gunned down by army defectors in a retaliatory ambush after government troops destroyed a civilian car, activists said.

It was the second day in a row in which an attack by President Bashar Assad's forces on civilians appears to have brought a quick and deadly act of revenge by anti-regime fighters. The ambush was the latest sign that the once-peaceful protest movement is growing into an insurgency.

The brazen midday attack came hours after troops fired upon a civilian car traveling

through the village of Khattab in the countryside of the central province of Hama, killing all five passengers inside.

The vehicle "exploded in a ball of fire," said Rami Abdul-Rahman, director of the British-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which relies on a network of activists on the ground inside the country.

Hours later, he said, gunmen ambushed a convoy of four military jeeps passing through the nearby village of al-Asharna on the northern outskirts of the city of Hama, spraying it with bullets. The gunmen are believed to be military defectors seeking revenge for the dawn attack targeting the car, he said.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the ambush, but the Free Syrian Army, a Turkish-based defector group, has in the past claimed similar attacks across the country.

Abdul-Rahman and other activists who confirmed the initial car attack did not say why soldiers targeted the vehicle, but security forces frequently hunt for suspects in the restive area. "The area is a stronghold of dissent where anti-regime protests are routinely held and where there are a number of (army) defectors," he said.

The Local Coordination Committees group said the car was destroyed by a shell fired



AP
In this image taken from amateur video made available by Sham News Network in Syria on Tuesday Dec. 13, 2011, shows pro-government militia on the street in Daraa Syria Tuesday.

Belgian city after deadly rampage asks 'Why?'

LIEGE, Belgium (AP)—A card at a memorial to the victims asked the question haunting all of Belgium: "Why?"

Why did Nordine Amrani, a 33-year-old with a history of lawbreaking, sweep into this city's holiday shopping center to unleash a grenade-and-gun rampage that killed three people and wounded 123 others? Why did he then kill himself?

Deepening the mystery, police announced Wednesday that another body had been found, that of a 45-year-old woman, in a shed where Amrani grew cannabis close to his home.

Liege Prosecutor Daniele Reynders said, after searches of Amrani's house, terrorism could be excluded.

"It was a cleaning lady. This is how she met him yesterday morning," she said. "She dies,

shot with a bullet in the head."

The Ferris Wheel at Liege's Christmas market started turning again Wednesday, hoping to restore some festive cheer, but the mood remained black as the coal that once drove this rustbelt city in eastern Belgium.

"The crowds won't show up," said Francoise Robert, a vendor selling miniature castles and Christmas items. "People are scared."

At the outdoor bus depot that Amrani attacked, a long parade of people bundled against the wind and rain paid tribute to the victims. Young women cried and families lit candles as shards of unswept glass still littered the pavement.

"Warum (why)?" asked one card, surrounded by toys, flowers and candles. The victims included a 1 1/2 year-old

toddler and two teenage boys, both students. Five others are reported in critical condition.

Adelie Miguel, a 48-year-old resident of Spanish descent, placed a bouquet of white tulips against the shattered bus stop.

"We are all Liegeois, united in suffering," she said. "This was an act of a sick man."

Beyond the dead and injured, Reynders said 40 other people had to be treated for psychological trauma.

In the capital, Brussels, the government pledged to toughen the gun law and put stricter controls on multiple offenders on conditional release. Amrani, who had done jail time for offenses involving guns and drugs, had been called in for questioning Tuesday by police in a sexual abuse case.

WORLD BRIEFS

Euro under pressure as EU summit optimism fades
FRANKFURT, Germany (AP)—Investors have soured on the latest attempt to resolve the European debt crisis. Stocks tumbled around the world Wednesday, the euro slid to an 11-month low and borrowing costs spiked for heavily indebted Italy. The markets' jitters reflect rising doubts about the deal European Union leaders reached at a summit last Friday in Brussels. The agreement requires the 17 countries that use the euro and nine other EU countries to balance their budgets and gives the International Monetary Fund up to euro200 (\$264 billion) to help countries with high debt loads.

Egypt's seculars desperate to balance Islamists
CAIRO (AP)—Overwhelmed by Islamists in parliamentary elections, the secular and liberal youths who were the driving force behind Egypt's uprising are scrambling to ensure their voices are not lost as a new constitution and government take shape. Two Islamist blocs—newly emboldened after decades of repression under Mubarak's secular regime—won close to 70 percent of seats in the initial balloting on Nov. 28-29, while the revolutionary parties got less than 15 percent so far, according to an Associated Press tally compiled from official results. A power struggle is emerging between religious factions and the ruling military, with liberals appearing to be on the sidelines.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC



Please be informed that **Ester Del Rosario Santos** former Accountant is no longer an employee of **Twins Supermarket** after **November 15, 2011**, and is therefore no longer authorized to act, in any form whatsoever, on Twins Supermarket's behalf. If you have any question or concern, please call 287-9288. Thank you.

MICHAEL A. WHITE, ESQ. F0122
THE LAW OFFICES OF MICHAEL A. WHITE, LLC
POST OFFICE BOX 5222
SAIPAN, MARIANA ISLANDS 96950
TEL: (670) 234-6547
FAX: (670) 234-9537

ATTORNEYS FOR Plaintiff

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN
MARIANA ISLANDS

BANK OF GUAM, Plaintiff,	CIVIL ACTION NO. 02-0408
-v-	SECOND AMENDED NOTICE OF SALE
ANGELINA A. MANGLONA, Defendant.	

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to Order issued by the Court in this matter on June 25, 2010, I will sell, at public auction, to the highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereinbelow, all the right, title, and interest of Defendant in and to the following property: Lot 345 R 404, situated in Rota, Northern Mariana Islands, containing an area of 929 square meters, more or less, as shown on the Division of Lands and Surveys Official Cadastral Plat No. 345 R 09 dated September 21, 1984, Commonwealth Recorder's File No. 84-2049.

Date, Time, and Place of Sale. The sale will be held on Friday, January 20, 2012, at the hour of 11:30 a.m., at the Superior Court, Sinapalo Village, Rota, Northern Mariana Islands. The sale will be open to the general public.

Terms and Conditions of Sale. The Terms and Conditions of Sale may be obtained from the undersigned, either prior to or at the sale. These terms and conditions shall govern the conduct of the sale.

DATED, this 24th day of October, 2011:

/s/ MICHAEL A. WHITE, Auctioneer

MICHAEL A. WHITE, ESQ. F0122
THE LAW OFFICES OF MICHAEL A. WHITE, LLC
POST OFFICE BOX 5222
SAIPAN, MARIANA ISLANDS 96950
TEL: (670) 234-6547
FAX: (670) 234-9537

ATTORNEYS FOR Plaintiff

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN
MARIANA ISLANDS

THE FINANCIAL & INSURANCE SERVICES GROUP, INC., Plaintiff,	CIVIL ACTION NO. 09-0458
-v-	FIRST AMENDED NOTICE OF SALE
DONALD C. CAMACHO, Defendant.	

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to Order issued by the Court in this matter on May 4, 2011, I will sell, at public auction, to the highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereinbelow, all the right, title, and interest of Defendant in and to the following property: Lot 001 C 60 (formerly part of Lot 001 C 56, which was part of Lot 001 C 26, which was part of original Lot 001 C 05, T.D 697), situated in San Roque Village, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, as more particularly described on Drawing/Cadastral Plat No. 001 C 12, the original of which was recorded 27 August 1999 as Document No. 99-2037 at the Commonwealth Recorder's Office, Saipan.

Date, Time, and Place of Sale. The sale will be held on Friday, December 30, 2011, at the hour of 1:30 p.m., at The Law Offices of Michael A. White, LLC, Joeten Center, Susupe, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. The sale will be open to the general public.

Terms and Conditions of Sale. The Terms and Conditions of Sale may be obtained from the undersigned, either prior to or at the sale. These terms and conditions shall govern the conduct of the sale.

DATED, this 14th day of November, 2011:

/s/ MICHAEL A. WHITE, Auctioneer

BRUCE L. MAILMAN, #F0153
MAILMAN & KARA, LLC
PMB 238 PPP, BOX 10000
SAIPAN, MP 96950-8900
Telephone: 233-0081
Facsimile: 233-0090

ATTORNEYS FOR PLAINTIFF
WELLS FARGO FINANCIAL, INC.

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN
MARIANA ISLANDS

WELLS FARGO FINANCIAL, INC. Plaintiff,	CIVIL ACTION NO. 11-0295 (E)
-v-	SUMMONS
FRANCISCO E. SANTOS, Defendant.	

TO: FRANCISCO E. SANTOS
P.O. BOX 511655
ROTA, MP 96951

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is given to you herewith, within twenty (20) days after service of this Summons upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to MAILMAN & KARA, LLC, Attn: Bruce L. Mailman, the Plaintiff's attorneys, whose address is PMB 238, Box 10000, Saipan, MP 96950, as soon as practicable after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Court for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at Guma Hustisia, Susupe, Saipan. It may be prepared and signed for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice. If you fail to file an answer in accordance with this Summons, judgment by default may be taken against you for the relief demanded in the Complaint.

By order of the above Court:

DATED, this 2nd day of November, 2011:

/s/ CLERK OF COURTS

Off The Wall

OFFBEAT BRIEFS

Booie, the smoking chimpanzee, dies at 44
LOS ANGELES (AP)—A chimpanzee that kicked a smoking habit and used sign language to beg for candy has died at a California animal refuge. Martine Colette of the Wildlife WayStation says Booie (BOO’-ee) was being treated for a heart condition when he died Saturday at 44. The chimp had been living at the animal sanctuary near Los Angeles since 1995, after he retired from a research lab. Colette says she turned Booie into a non-smoker but couldn’t fix his sweet tooth. She says he would use his skill to pan-handle by signing: “Booie see sweet in pocket.” Booie’s death is a serious blow to the financially troubled refuge because he was one of its best fundraisers. Martine says he had fans around the world because of his TV appearances.

Dogs get day in court after receiving subpoenas
PORTLAND, Ore. (AP)—The four members of the group subpoenaed to appear in Multnomah County Circuit Court remained mute as they appeared before the jury. One, however, did slobber on the rug. The three Great Danes and one blue pit bull were ordered to appear this week in the animal neglect trial of their owners, Wayne Martin and Layne Woods. The Portland residents are accused of failing to give two of the dogs adequate veterinary care. Defense attorney Chris O’Connor subpoenaed Merlin, Patches, Coco and Raven to demonstrate that they were in good shape. The group waited quietly—and without accidents—Monday and Tuesday to be called for the witness stand in Judge John Wittmayer’s courtroom.

Police: Fugitive chaperoned daughter’s field trip
SEATTLE (AP)—Seattle police say a man on the run for a litany of crimes was spotted chaperoning his daughter’s elementary school field trip. Donald Vasser was featured on “Washington’s Most Wanted,” a local law enforcement show in the style of “America’s Most Wanted.” It described the 39-year-old man as a “high-violent offender” with more than 20 arrests under his belt. Seattle police spokeswoman Renee Witt says another parent recognized him and police were called in after the students came back to Lowell Elementary School on Wednesday. Vasser fled before police arrived, and officers were unable to find him even though the school was locked down.

Mich. woman’s lawsuit

says SUV smells like corpse

NEW BALTIMORE, Mich. (AP)—A Detroit-area woman is suing an auto dealership, claiming her new SUV smells bad because it once contained a corpse. The Detroit News and CBS Detroit reported Monday that Margarita Salais (suh-LAZE’) sued Suburban Ford of Sterling Heights in Oakland County Circuit Court. The suit claims the dealership failed to disclose that the car had been stolen three times and once held a body. The lawsuit says Suburban Ford told Salais that the bad smell in the 2006 Ford Expedition came from a dead animal. A letter in her suit says a hazardous materials company determined it was a human odor.

Police: Central Pa. man tried sham ‘shroom swindle

EPHRATA, Pa. (AP)—The mushrooms may have lacked the magic he claimed they had, but a man’s attempt to sell them landed him behind bars anyway. Jayson Hartman was trying to pass off some shredded shiitake and porcini mushrooms as the psychedelic variety when officers broke up the attempted sale last month, said police in the central Pennsylvania city of Ephrata. Hartman alleged admitted he chopped up store-bought mushrooms then bagged them in an attempt to pass them off as the illegal variety, Ephrata police Sgt. Philip Snavelly told the *Intelligencer Journal/Lancaster New Era*.



JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

The Commonwealth Cancer Association (CCA) is the community-based cancer support organization for the Northern Mariana Islands dedicated to eliminating cancer and saving lives by providing Advocacy, Awareness, Education, Services and HOPE for all its constituents

CCA is a non-profit organization managed by a 7 member Board of Directors who represents the diversity of the CNMI. CCA’s operational funding is fully supported by contributions from corporations, families and individuals.

Position Description: Program Manager

As a Program Manager you will serve as an advocate for the CCA, supporting the CCA’s mission and helping the organization better communicate who we are and what we do for the people who need us most. Eligible candidates need qualifications enabling them to fulfill the following key responsibilities:

- Manage budget and comply with stringent guidelines for program services offered to cancer patients and constituents
- Coordinate and collaborate with the Cancer Council of the Pacific Islands CNMI Representative and the CNMI Comprehensive Cancer Control Plan (CCCCP) and effectively collaborate with the Program Manager to advocate and further our mission goals
- Develop, manage and grow revenue goals through multiple, fundraising events and collateral sales
- Assist the Event Chairperson(s) and participate in efficiently carrying out our signature fundraising event the “Marianas March Against Cancer”, by attending Organization Committee and Team Captain meetings
- Mobilize and coordinate a CNMI community-wide volunteer working committee to implement the CNMI CCCC
- Develop and cultivate community partnerships/relationships and participate in appropriate coalitions
- Prepare/disseminate reports and publications such as an annual report, weekly performance report, bulletins, brochures, flyers, and various other promotional and educational cancer-related materials
- Assertively promote CCA Advocacy, initiatives, education and services to schools, worksites and community leaders to effectively build broad based support for our mission
- Seek monetary and in-kind donations from our business, community, private/public grants and endowments through direct solicitation, grant application and or bartering of goods and services
- Capture and track constituents served from our projects and services
- Comply and demonstrate ability to work within established budgets
- Effectively arrange monthly board meetings and other work as assigned by the President or his/her designee
- Plan ahead and always anticipate what is wanted and needed and be out in front in seeing that we meet our goals and responsibilities to the community.

Qualifications and Position Requirements:

- AA Degree and/or equivalent combination of education and experience
- Two years experience in sales, event management, customer service or volunteer management
- Demonstrated project management skills with high attention to detail and ability to multi task and delegate
- Demonstrated ability to inspire volunteers
- Strong relationship building skills
- Possess high energy, positive attitude
- Ability to maintain professional demeanor
- Must be a team player who can effectively work and interact with volunteers and the public
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Demonstrated presentation skills
- Proficient with Microsoft Office Suite more specifically MS Publisher, Adobe Photoshop or comparable software, database and spreadsheet management, e-mail software and Internet browsers
- Travel to Rota, Tinian, regional and Stateside may be required and will be funded by CCA as Contracting Party
- Evening and weekend work required

Condition of Employment and Remuneration:

- Independent Contract Agreement - At Will, Exempt Contract Employment
- Contract remuneration \$25,000.00 to \$32,000.00 per annum depending on qualifications and experience.
- This position requires that you have a 2010 CNMI Business License
- Please submit cover letter and resume by the deadline of **December 21, 2011 at 5:00PM** to the CCA email at cca@ccamarianas.org, or hand deliver it to the CCA office located in Gualo Rai. Address your cover letter to Bud White, President of CCA, or to Maggie Camacho, Chair of the Selection Committee. For more information, please call our office at 682-0050



**CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM – OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS**

Caller Box 10007
Saipan, MP 96950

Tel.: (670) 664-2375
Fax: (670) 664-2408

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
A&E DESIGN of the KALABERA CAVE DEVELOPMENT
PROJECT MARPI, SAIPAN
RFP12-GOV-022**

Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lieutenant Governor Eloy S. Inos, through the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Office, (collectively, “Commonwealth”) are soliciting sealed proposals from qualified consultants to provide Architectural & Engineering Design of the Kalabera Cave Development Project, located on Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Proposal procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, dated May 24, 2001, or latest revision thereof. Public Law 15-95 (Local Preference Act) as amended by Public Law 15-118 does not apply to this Federally funded project. All wage rates for employees performing the work, labor and services on this project shall be paid at the current U.S. prevailing wage rates established for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

The complete Scope of Work for the A&E services required will be available on Monday, December 05, 2011, at the Governor’s CIP Administrator’s Office, Juan A. Sablan Administration Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan, CNMI. A non-refundable payment of Fifty Dollars (US \$50.00) is required for each set. Payment must be made to the CNMI Treasurer and a receipt of payment must be presented when obtaining the Scope of Work at the CIP Office, Juan A. Sablan Administration Building, Capitol Hill. Questions regarding the RFP must be submitted in writing to Mr. James R. Stump, CIP Contracting Officer, or fax to (670) 664-2408, no later than 4:00 p.m. ChST December 20, 2011.

Proposers must submit with their proposal a Project Approach and a Schedule of Completion, addressing the Scope of Work requirements with details of how the work will be performed and accomplished by the consultants, with the names of the responsible persons identified. Proposers shall also submit a statement of qualifications with resumes and experience for the responsible persons. The total proposal length shall not exceed fifty (50) pages in length, inclusive of resumes and previous project descriptions. Note that a firm which submits a proposal as a prime consultant, cannot also submit as a subcontractor on another proposal. However, as a subcontractor, the consultant may be included in multiple proposals by different consultants.

Proposals will be evaluated and scored based on the following criteria:

- | | | |
|----|---|-------|
| 1. | Qualifications and Background of the Company(s) and proposed assigned personnel | - 25% |
| 2. | Past experience of the consultant on design of similar projects | - 25% |
| 3. | Project Approach and Schedule for Completion | - 25% |
| 4. | Demonstrated capability of ability to perform the work required | - 25% |
| 5. | Fee Proposal | - 0% |

Performance time for completion of the A&E Design is One Hundred Eighty (180) calendar days upon issuance of a Notice to Proceed. Liquidated damages will be assessed and shall be the greater of (i) two hundred dollars (US\$200.00), or (ii) two percent (2%) of the contract price divided by the number of calendar days of the contract time, the contract time and contract price being determined at the time of the assessment of liquidated damages for each and every day beyond the established completion date.

Discussions shall be conducted with the top three (3) ranked firms. After a selection is made negotiations will be conducted with the highest qualified firm to determine the final fair and reasonable price of the contract for the work to be performed. The successful proposers will be subjected to a responsibility and responsiveness determination in compliance with Section 3-301 of the CNMI Procurement Regulations.

Proposals must be sealed and marked “**RFP12-GOV-022, A&E Design of the Kalabera Cave Development Project**”. For proposers within the CNMI, one original and five (5) copies of the proposals must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, MP, no later than 10:00 a.m. ChST, January 04, 2012. Proposers located outside the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their proposal by submitting a Notice of Intent to Propose. Notices of Intent to Propose must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than 10:00 a.m. ChST, January 04, 2012, and may be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to procurement@pticom.com. For proposers located outside the CNMI, one original and five (5) copies of the sealed proposals must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than, January 04, 2012, and must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than January 17, 2012 ChST. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies of the proposal may be cause for rejection of a proposal.

The Commonwealth reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to waive any imperfections in any proposal if, in its opinion to do so would be in the best interests of the CNMI government. All proposals shall become the sole property of the CNMI government.

/s/ Eloy S. Inos, Lieutenant Governor

/s/ Herman S. Sablan, Director of Procurement & Supply



**Northern Marianas
Humanities Council**

Navigating the Human Experience

Vacancy Announcement

**Program Officer
Northern Marianas Humanities Council**

The Northern Marianas Humanities Council (Council) is soliciting applications for the position of Program Officer. The Program Officer is responsible for developing and implementing a variety of humanities programs and events and coordinating the Council’s Community Grants program under the supervision of the Council’s executive director and board of directors. A detailed description of the Program Officer’s duties may be obtained from the Council’s office in Springs Plaza, Gualo Rai or from the Council’s website at www.nmihumanities.org.

Applicants for this position must possess: (1). strong analytic, writing and communication skills; (2). knowledge of grants writing and grants administration; (3). the ability to work effectively with people from diverse backgrounds; (4). a working knowledge of NMI history and of current political, social and economic issues confronting the local community; (5). basic computer skills including knowledge of MS Excel, Word and PowerPoint; and (6). the ability to articulate the Council’s mission to a wide range of audiences.

Applicants must have a bachelor’s degree (B.A. or B.S.) in a humanities discipline from an accredited postsecondary institution. The salary range is from \$35,000 to \$40,000 depending on qualifications and experience. Benefits are set forth in the NMICH Personnel Policy Manual.

Interested individuals are invited to send an application package including: (1). letter of interest; (2). detailed résumé; (3). a writing sample (500-800 words on a humanities topic of your choice); and (4). the names and addresses of three references to Scott Russell, Executive Director, Northern Marianas Humanities Council, Box 506407, Saipan, MP 96950. Complete application packages must be received by Council staff on or before 4:00 p.m. on Monday, January 9, 2012. For more information about this employment opportunity please contact Council staff at 235-4785.

The Northern Marianas Humanities Council is an equal opportunity employer.

Science & Technology

New operating system for space: High-tech tycoons

SEATTLE (AP)—The tycoons of cyberspace are looking to bankroll America's resurgence in outer space, reviving "Star Trek" dreams that first interested them in science.

Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen made the latest step Tuesday, unveiling plans for a new commercial spaceship that, instead of blasting off a launch pad, would be carried high into the atmosphere by the widest plane ever built before it fires its rockets.

He joins Silicon Valley powerhouses Elon Musk of PayPal and Jeff Bezos of Amazon.com Inc. in a new private space race that attempts to fill the gap left when the U.S. government ended the space shuttle program.

Musk, whose Space Exploration Technologies will send its Dragon capsule to dock with the International Space Station in February, will provide the capsule and booster rocket for Allen's venture, which is called Stratolaunch. Bezos is building a rival private spaceship.

Allen is working with aerospace pioneer Burt Rutan, who collaborated with the tycoon in 2004 to win a \$10 million prize for the first flight of a private spaceship that went into space but not orbit.

Allen says his enormous air-

plane and spaceship system will go to "the next big step: a private orbital space platform business."

The new system is "a radical change" in how people can get to space, and it will "keep America at the forefront of space exploration," Allen said.

Their plane will have a 380-foot wingspan—longer than a football field and wider than the biggest aircraft ever, Howard Hughes' Spruce Goose.

It will launch a space capsule equipped with a booster rocket, which will send the spacecraft into orbit. This method saves money by not using rocket fuel to get off the ground. The spaceship may hold as many as six people.

"When I was growing up, America's space program was the symbol of aspiration," said Allen, who mentioned his love of science fiction and early human spaceflights. "For me, the fascination with space never ended. I never stopped dreaming what might be possible."

For those attracted to difficult technical challenges, space is the ultimate challenge, Allen said.

"It's also the ultimate adventure. We all grew up devouring science fiction and watching Mercury and Gemini, Apollo and the space shuttle. And now

we are able to be involved in moving things to the next level," he said, adding that he admires people like his former Microsoft colleague Charles Simonyi who have gone into space to experience it.

Allen is not alone in having such dreams, and the money to gamble on making them come true.

Bezos set up the secretive private space company Blue Origin, which has received \$3.7 million in NASA startup funds to develop a rocket to carry astronauts. Its August flight test ended in failure.

"Space was the inspiration that got people into high-tech ... at least individuals in their 40s and 50s," said Peter Diamandis, who created the space prize Allen won earlier and is a high-tech mogul-turned space business leader himself. "Now they're coming full circle."

Diamandis helped found a company that sends tourists to space for at least \$25 million a ride, and seven of the eight rides involved high-tech executives living out their space dreams. Simonyi paid at least \$20 million apiece for two rides into orbit and attended Allen's Tuesday news conference, saying he wouldn't mind a third flight.

Life & Style

Founder of famous Paris bookstore dies at 98



This Wednesday, June 1, 2011, file photo shows the Shakespeare and Company bookshop in Paris.

PARIS (AP)—George Whitman's life was packed with the type of adventures that filled every nook and cranny of his bookshop, Paris' iconic English-language Shakespeare and Company.

A bohemian traveler, Whitman was once nursed to health by Mayans in the Yucatan during a 3,000-mile (5,000-kilometer) trek across Latin America and sometimes bragged that he had lived in Greenland with a beautiful Eskimo woman.

At home, Whitman was best known as a pillar of Paris' literary scene. For more than half century, his eclectic Left Bank shop was a beacon for readers, who spent long hours browsing its overflowing shelves or curling up with a good book next to a drowsy cat Shakespeare and Company was also a haven for every author or would-be writer passing through the City of Light.

For them, Whitman reserved a welcome that turned Yeats' famous verse—"Be not inhospitable to strangers / Lest they be angels in disguise"—into deed: He took in aspiring writers as boarders in exchange for a helping hand in the store.

Whitman died Wednesday in his apartment above the bookstore, two days after his 98th birthday and two months after suffering a stroke, the store announced on its website.

He "showed incredible strength and determination up to the end" and read every day with his daughter, his friends and his cat and dog, according to the state-

ment. "Nicknamed the Don Quixote of the Latin Quarter, George will be remembered for his free spirit, his eccentricity and his generosity."

The store was shuttered Wednesday, and longtime customers, students and anonymous book-lovers lit candles on its stoop to pay their respects.

The store will live on under the management of Whitman's daughter, Sylvia Whitman. In an interview with The Associated Press earlier this year, she summed up the unique store this way: "My father says it's a Socialist utopia masquerading as a bookstore."

Whitman was born on Dec. 12, 1913, in East Orange, New Jersey, although he grew up in Massachusetts.

His twin loves of the written word and foreign travel were nurtured early on, when his father, a physics professor who authored several science books, took the family along for a yearlong sabbatical at a Chinese university in 1925.

That was the first of a series of adventures that later saw Whitman wander Latin America, sail to Hawaii and hitch his way across the United States.

After graduating from Boston University with a degree in journalism in 1935, Whitman enlisted in the U.S. Army. During World War II, he was trained as a Medical Warrant Officer and treated the wounded at hospitals across Europe, according to the store's statement.

Whitman moved to Paris permanently under the GI Bill in 1948. Three years later, he

founded his bookshop in a rickety old building directly across the Seine River from Notre Dame cathedral. Initially baptized "Le Mistral" after the blustering winds that blow in off the Mediterranean, the shop's name was later changed.

The original Shakespeare and Company bookstore came from legendary literary matron Sylvia Beach, and the place was a magnet for English-speaking expats like Ernest Hemingway and F. Scott Fitzgerald. She opened that store in the early 1920s in a Left Bank district not far from its current home, on the rue de l'Odeon. The shop gained fame by publishing Irish writer James Joyce's banned book "Ulysses." World War II forced it to close, and Whitman gave Shakespeare and Company a new life in new digs in 1951.

Over the decades, Whitman's refuge for literary souls from far and wide became a Paris institution. It's widely regarded as an honor for authors to give a reading at the store, where eager listeners jostle for a spot among the stacks of first, second- and thirdhand books lining the walls and floors.

Whitman was made an officer of arts and letters by the French Culture Ministry in 2006.

He is to be buried in the city's venerable Pere Lachaise cemetery, where the remains of literary giants including Oscar Wilde, Balzac and French poet Guillaume Apollinaire rest, the posting said. The date of the funeral has not yet been set.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Verna Masga Reyes

FONDLY KNOWN AS "VERN"
March 5, 1974 – December 10, 2011

of Yona, Guam formerly of Kagman III, Saipan was called home by our heavenly Father at the age of 37.

In her new life, Verna will be met at the gates of heaven by her mother, †Francisca Masga Reyes, Grandparents: †Nicolas B. & †Ignacia A. Reyes; †Jose H. & †Maria A. Masga.

Verna's love and memories will always be cherished in the hearts of her:

Domestic Partner: John B. Lizama

Children: Francea R. Lizama; Derick R. Lizama; John R. Lizama; & Jonah R. Lizama

Father/Stepmother: Jose Agulto Reyes & Soledad (Darling) C. Duenas

Brothers/Sisters & Spouses: Dennis & Yvonne M. Reyes – Kyana, Jake, Joseph, Alexis & JDen; Nick & Mary S. Reyes – Amber, Chelses & Nico; Doreen & John Sablan – John, Ashley, Maegan, Josh & Colvin; Jovene & Patrick Ogo – Kishia, Keoni & Kianny;

Germaine & Peter Crisostimo – Korey & Myah

Numerous aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews & friends will also miss her.

Last respect for Verna will be held on Monday, December 19, 2011 where her remains will be escorted from Nuestra Señora dela Paz Memorial Chapel, Cabrera Center to Mt. Carmel Cathedral for public viewing from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. Mass for a Christian burial will be offered at 11:00 a.m. Interment will follow at Chalan Kanoa Cemetery where we will bid her farewell and a peaceful rest.

Life & Style

Judge says Lindsay Lohan doing well on probation

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A judge offered Lindsay Lohan something Wednesday that she hadn't heard from a court in nearly two years: Praise.

Superior Court Judge Stephanie Sautner said the actress was doing well under strict new terms of her probation and urged her to keep up the good work.

The starlet has completed 12 days at the county morgue and five therapy sessions since Nov. 2, when she was sentenced to a strict routine of community service and counseling after her latest probation violation.

"You're doing well and I'd like to see it continue," Sautner said during a 10-minute status hearing.

She also offered Lohan an incentive to succeed, saying the actress could take leisure trips outside California after she completes a dozen days of morgue work a month.

The actress had permission from her probation officer to take a trip to Hawaii to celebrate her sister's birthday. She returned just hours before the hearing.

Lohan, 25, has drawn the repeated ire of judges for failing to complete counseling sessions and community service assignments on time. Sautner made clear Wednesday that she believes Lohan's new schedule—which requires the model



Lindsay Lohan, right, alongside her attorney Shawn Chapman Holley are seen during a progress report session at the Los Angeles Superior Court Wednesday, Dec. 14, 2011 in Los Angeles.

and actress to appear in court monthly until March—is the reason for the turnaround.

The judge even hinted that Lohan might end her supervised probation early if she works harder.

"Do more days a month and we can end this in February, possibly," Sautner said.

The judge said Lohan should keep reporting to court in person to make sure she remains on track.

"I think she likes to come see

me," Sautner joked. "I think that's her motivation."

Lohan appeared in court wearing brown slacks and a beige cardigan and found a smaller crowd of reporters than has chronicled the actress' court scoldings since she missed a hearing in May 2010.

The last time she appeared in court without a probation compliance issue on the agenda was February 2010.

Judges repeatedly sent her to

jail and rehab since then, and Sautner said last month she was giving Lohan one final chance to end the court spectacle.

The actress remains on probation for a 2007 drunken driving case and a misdemeanor grand theft case filed after she took a \$2,500 necklace without permission from a store.

Her appearance Wednesday came days before a Playboy issue featuring Lohan in a mostly nude pictorial hits newsstands.

'War Horse' author makes quiet appearance in play

NEW YORK (AP)—Audiences at Wednesday's matinee performance of "War Horse" likely never noticed a very special actor who was making his Lincoln Center stage debut.

Best-selling author Michael Morpurgo, who wrote the book the Tony Award-winning play is based on, was part of more than a dozen actors watching the auctioning of the horse Joey at the top of the show.

The author, who made a similar crowd scene appearance in the London production of "War Horse" and was an extra in Steven Spielberg's movie version, didn't have any dialogue and didn't appear again until the curtain call a few hours later. The only hint he was there was when the auctioneer called out



In this undated file photo released by HarperCollins, British author Michael Morpurgo, author of "War Horse," is shown.

for "Mr. Morpurgo."

"They hide me away," the 68-year-old writer said with a

smile during a backstage interview, still wearing his velvety Edwardian-era coat. "For me, it's a wonderful privilege for me to be connected to this whole way that theater works."

In some ways, Morpurgo's New York professional acting debut was more meaningful than the others: His father—the Canadian actor Anthony van Bridge—twice appeared at Lincoln Center in the 1960s.

Morpurgo, who has written more than 100 children's books, had come to New York after visiting the Canadian cast of "War Horse" in Toronto, which starts up in February. The chance to step where his father stepped years ago was too irresistible to turn down.

"I thought, 'I've got to go and be in the same place.' Isn't it silly?" he said. "I love

full circles."

Van Bridge, a respected actor in Canada who was a fixture at the Shaw and Stratford festivals, left Morpurgo's mother after returning from World War II to find she'd rather be with another man. Morpurgo and his father eventually reunited when he was in his 20s; he now calls him a "sweet, kind man."

"War Horse" premiered at the National Theatre in November 2007. After two sold-out runs, it moved to London's West End in March 2009, where it continues to play at the New London Theatre. It opened at Lincoln Center this year and won five Tonys, including best play, and a U.S. tour will open in Los Angeles in June and travel to 19 cities, including Philadelphia, Dallas and Minneapolis.

Huntsman to ham it up with Letterman on Dec. 21

EXETER, N.H. (AP)—Republican presidential candidate Jon Huntsman is set to appear on the "Late Show" with David Letterman next week.

The former Utah governor is struggling both in the polls and to raise money to keep his campaign going after the nation's first presidential primary in New Hampshire on Jan. 10.

Like some of his rivals, Huntsman is hoping the late-

night comedy circuit will help boost his popularity.

CBS announced Wednesday that Huntsman will join Letterman on Dec. 21.

GOP candidates Rick Perry and Michele Bachmann have also done the late-night comedy tour. So did Herman Cain, before he suspended his campaign. Huntsman also took part in a recent "Saturday Night Live" skit.

Country singer Billie Jo Spears dies at 73

VIDOR, Texas (AP)—Singer Billie Jo Spears, whose performance of "Blanket on the Ground" went No. 1 on the country charts in 1975, has died at age 73.

A funeral home spokesman confirmed her death Wednesday evening. Carl Willis of R.S. Farmer Funeral Home in Silsbee had no details.

The Orange Leader newspaper in Texas reported that she

died Wednesday morning at her home in Vidor (VYE'dur), 85 miles northeast of Houston. No cause of death was stated.

The Beaumont native was voted most promising female vocalist by the Academy of Country Music in 1976.

Her other hits included "Mr. Walker, It's All Over" in 1969; "What I've Got in Mind" in 1976; "Misty Blue" in 1976; and "If You Want Me" in 1977.

HOLLYWOOD THEATERS

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\$4.75 All Day Admission For Kids (ages 3-11)
\$6.00 Student Admission with Valid I.D.
\$6.00 Military with Valid I.D.

T TIMEWARP TUESDAY
\$6.00 ALL SHOWS ALL DAY/NIGHT
(EXCLUDING HOLIDAYS AND RESTRICTED FEATURES)

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Friday, Dec. 16th through Monday, Dec. 19th, 2011
OPEN SEVEN DAYS A WEEK

★ ★ ★ NOW SHOWING ★ ★ ★

Sherlock Holmes2: A Game of Shadows

Friday	1:05	4:05	7:05	9:45
Saturday	1:05	4:05	7:05	9:45
Sunday	1:05	4:05	7:05	9:45
Monday	1:05	4:05	7:05	9:45
Tuesday	4:05	7:05	9:45	
Wednesday & Thursday	4:05	7:05		

Robert Downey, Jr. Jude Law • Action, Mystery • Rated PG 13

Alvin and the Chipmunks: Chipwrecked

Friday	1:20	4:20	7:20	9:35
Saturday	1:20	4:20	7:20	9:35
Sunday	1:20	4:20	7:20	9:35
Monday	1:20	4:20	7:20	9:35
Tuesday	4:20	7:20	9:35	
Wednesday & Thursday	4:20	7:20		

Jason Lee • Children's/family • Rated G

COMING SOON
MISSION IMPOSSIBLE: GHOST PROTOCOL
THE GIRL WITH THE DRAGON TATTOO
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 20TH

New Year's Eve

Friday	1:25	4:25	7:25	9:40
Saturday	1:25	4:25	7:25	9:40
Sunday	1:25	4:25	7:25	9:40
Monday	1:25	4:25	7:25	9:40
Tuesday	4:25	7:25	9:40	
Wednesday & Thursday	4:25	7:25		

Halle Berry, Ashton Kutcher • Comedy drama • Rated PG13

The Sitter

Friday	1:15	4:15	7:15	9:55
Saturday	1:15	4:15	7:15	9:55
Sunday	1:15	4:15	7:15	9:55
Monday	1:15	4:15	7:15	9:55
Tuesday	4:15	7:15	9:55	

Jonah Hill, Sam Rockwell, Ari Graynor • Comedy • Rated R

Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn-Part 1

Friday	1:10	4:10	7:10	9:30
Saturday	1:10	4:10	7:10	9:30
Sunday	1:10	4:10	7:10	9:30
Monday	1:10	4:10	7:10	9:30
Tuesday	4:10	7:10	9:30	
Wednesday & Thursday	4:10	7:10		

Robert Pattinson, Kristen Stewart • Fantasy • Rated PG 13

Happy Feet Two

Friday	1:00	4:00	7:00	10:00
Saturday	1:00	4:00	7:00	10:00
Sunday	1:00	4:00	7:00	10:00
Monday	1:00	4:00	7:00	10:00
Tuesday	4:00	7:00	10:00	

Elijah Wood, Robin Williams • Children's/family • Rated PG

Arthur Christmas

Friday	1:30	4:30	7:30
Saturday	1:30	4:30	7:30
Sunday	1:30	4:30	7:30
Monday	1:30	4:30	7:30
Tuesday	4:30	7:30	
Wednesday & Thursday	4:30	7:30	

James McAvoy, Hugh Laurie • Comedy • Rated PG

Jack and Jill

Friday	9:50
Saturday	9:50
Sunday	7:30
Monday	7:30
Tuesday	9:50
Wednesday & Thursday	7:30

Adam Sandler, Katie Holmes • Comedy • Rated PG

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Jackson daughter tells 'Ellen' about acting dreams

In this Dec. 13, 2011 photo released by Warner Bros., talk show host Ellen DeGeneres, right, welcomes Paris Jackson, daughter of the late pop star Michael Jackson during a taping of "The Ellen DeGeneres Show" in Burbank, Calif.

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Michael Jackson's daughter says she was inspired to be an actress after seeing her father in the film "Moonwalker."

"My dad was in the movie 'Moonwalker' and I knew he could sing really well, but I didn't know he could act," Paris Jackson told talk show host Ellen DeGeneres, according to a tran-

script of the episode to air Thursday. "I saw that and I said, 'Wow, I want to be just like him.'"

The film featuring Jackson's signature dance move and other videos was released in 1988.

Paris said her father encouraged her and did improvisation sessions to develop her skills. The 13-year-old has been cast alongside Larry King in a film

based on a new children's book, "Lundon's Bridge and the Three Keys," which is in early stages of development.

The Internet Movie Database, known as IMDB, shows the film is tentatively scheduled for a 2013 release, although filmmakers have not presented the teen's proposed acting contract to a Los Angeles court as re-

quired because she is a minor.

Paris also talked about the lengths that her father took to protect her identity for an episode that will air on Thursday.

She said her father protected her and her two brothers from the media, such as by placing them in masks or dressing them in costumes when they were in public. She said she initially thought wearing the mask was stupid, but later came to realize that it was for her and her brothers' protection.

She said no one recognized her when she began attending school after her father's death in June 2009.

"I was like, yes, I have a chance to be normal," she said.

Jackson's children have since been in the public eye, appearing onstage at their father's televised memorial service, the Grammy Awards and other television appearances.

'Law & Order' vet Meloni to join 'True Blood' cast

NEW YORK (AP)—HBO says "Law and Order" veteran Chris Meloni will be sinking his teeth into a role on vampire drama "True Blood."

The network confirmed Wednesday that Meloni will be joining the popular series as an ancient, powerful vampire who controls the fate of the show's major characters.

The series' fifth season is expected to air next summer. Its stars include Anna Paquin and Stephen Moyer.

Meloni recently ended a 12-year run on NBC's "Law & Order: Special Victims Unit," where he played Detective Elliot Stabler.

Before that, the 50-year-old actor was a regular as a bisexual inmate on HBO's gritty prison drama, "Oz."

Generation gap can cause a failure to communicate

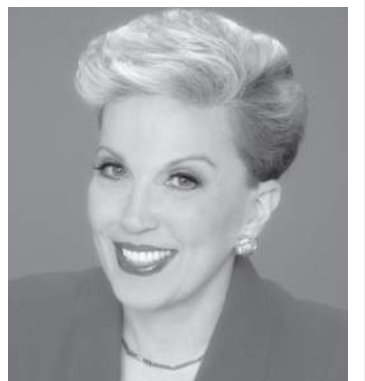
By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DEAR ABBY: My fiancée said, "Shut UP!" during a recent conversation with my mom, using the phrase in the same way people say, "No way!" or, "Get outta here!" to express friendly disbelief.

Mom didn't say anything and gave me no reason to believe she was offended; however, I find talk like that better suited to friends and siblings—not parents or future in-laws.

As soon as we were alone I asked my fiancée to please not use that expression with my parents. She said she'd try, but warned me that it might be hard to stop herself. A frequent reader of your column, she also said you probably would have told me to let it go. I suggested we find out. Should I have said nothing?

POSSIBLE PRUDE IN NEW HAMPSHIRE



Dear Abby

DEAR POSSIBLE PRUDE: Your fiancée is mistaken. I would never advise someone to ignore something that could be offensive. You were right to speak up. For people in your parents' generation, "shut up" has a different connotation than with younger people and could be considered offensive. I hope your intended will take your suggestion to heart. However, in case she should slip, explain to your folks that the phrase is used commonly and isn't meant as an insult—as jarring to them as it may be to hear.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: I have had the same group of friends for 20 years. They are an affluent group—doctors, lawyers, etc.—and very social. My best friend got wind of the fact that I had gone out with an African-American man. She confronted me, told me we could no longer be friends and then kicked me out of her house. If I call her, she hangs up on me.

We had a loving, longtime friendship. It has been five months now and NO ONE has called. I am sad and shocked. I always thought of her as my best friend, and my other friends who were also dear to me are shunning me as well. What should I do?

OUTCAST IN THE SOUTH

DEAR OUTCAST: I know this has been painful, but you need to recognize that in spite of their educational and financial advantages, your friends' thinking hasn't changed despite nearly 50 years of improving race relations. You grew; they didn't. For your own sake, you must accept that you and these people are on different paths and will never agree on this. Look elsewhere for companions who think more like you do. Believe me, there are many out there.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: With the holidays here and family gathering to celebrate, some will be overnight guests. Although we have had pets here in the past, my wife and I are older now. Our home has been remodeled and we no longer have pets because we don't have time to properly maintain an animal. We also travel frequently and don't want to leave a pet in a kennel.

My point is, if people are guests during one of these gatherings, please check first to see if pets are welcome. I know some relatives may feel their pet is one of the family, but they need to consider it may be a burden for the homeowner.

Thanks for getting my message out, Abby.

"THE OLD GUY" IN WISCONSIN

DEAR "OLD GUY": Excuse me? What if the family members your message is intended for happen to miss reading my column? Because you want to ensure the message is received, the most effective method to do that would be to speak up and make your wishes known in advance—especially in a case like this one.

■■■

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

■■■

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$12 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in price.)

'New Hollywood' producer Bert Schneider dies at 78

LOS ANGELES (AP)—"Five Easy Pieces" producer Bert Schneider, credited for inspiring a "New Hollywood" band of independent filmmakers, has died in Los Angeles at 78.

With producer-director Bob Rafelson, Schneider also created the Monkees pop band. Daughter Audrey Simon tells the Los Angeles Times (<http://lat.ms/ugzokk>) that Schneider died on Monday of natural causes at Olympia Medical Center.

Schneider produced 11 movies from 1969 to 1981, including "Easy Rider," "Five Easy Pieces" and "The Last Picture Show." Those movies about rootlessness and discontent became symbols of a new era that helped filmmakers break out of the studio system.

Schneider also produced the Oscar-winning 1974 anti-Vietnam War documentary "Hearts and Minds."



In an April 8, 1975 file photo, movie producer Bert Schneider holds the Oscar he received with co-producer Peter Davis for Best Documentary feature, "Hearts and Minds," at the 47th annual Academy Awards at the L.A. Music Center.

Actress Kirstie Alley's Kansas home vandalized

WICHITA, Kan. (AP)—Police have increased patrols in a Wichita, Kan., neighborhood after actress Kirstie Alley's house was vandalized twice last weekend.

The Wichita Eagle reports (<http://bit.ly/rJjMZW>) that police records show it's the third time since October that Alley's

house has been vandalized.

The actress voiced her frustration on Twitter Sunday, saying "Next time gonna B met with a big dog and an even bigger shotgun.. warned."

Police say windows were broken in a back door of the house twice last weekend.

Someone kicked in the back door in mid-October.

Lt. Barry Von Fange says the same person might be responsible for all three incidents but might not realize who owns the home because it's generally vacant. He says Alley, who is from Wichita, has a caretaker watch the house.

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Hornets, Clippers agree on Chris Paul trade



NEW ORLEANS (AP)—Chris Paul is headed to Los Angeles for real this time—to the Clippers, not the Lakers.

The Hornets traded Paul to the Clippers for guard Eric Gordon, forward Al-Farouq Aminu, center Chris Kaman and a first-round draft choice.

The deal required the approval of NBA Commissioner David Stern because the Hornets are owned by the league.

For Paul, Wednesday night's trade means no more lame-duck practices—or ducking questions—in New Orleans.

It also ended a tortured week in which the Hornets' season sat in limbo while the NBA took a public relations beating over everything from potential conflicts of interest, to retarding the Hornets' pursuit of free agents, to disrespecting the New Orleans fan base.

"I knew we were doing the best thing for New Orleans and that was my job," Stern said. "You have to stick with what you think was right. I must confess it wasn't a lot of fun, but I don't get paid to have fun."

Stern said he never allowed other owners' opinions or considerations of large and small markets to determine where Paul, one of the NBA's biggest stars, would end up. He said his only focus was on getting the best deal for the Hornets.

That may take time to determine. But for now, the Hornets at last have a measure of certainty about the roster they'll have when the regular season begins in less than two weeks.

Paul, already a star with international appeal, gets to play in one of the NBA's biggest markets, even if his new team plays in the shadow of the Lakers. That's the club Paul was almost traded to last week, only to have Stern nix the deal and unleash a torrent of bad publicity on his league just as it was trying to generate good will following a nearly five-month labor dispute that has already caused a shortening of the season.

Then again, maybe there is no such thing as bad publicity, or as Stern called it, "a frenzy." Even with the NFL's Saints on a five-game winning streak and wrapping up a playoff spot, the Hornets and Paul ordeal were the talk of New Orleans for a change.

"Our sole focus was and will remain, until we sell this team, hopefully which will be in first half of 2012, how best to maintain the Hornets, make them as attractive and a competitive as we can and ensure we have a buyer who can keep them in New Orleans," Stern said.

Stern said the team is in negotiations with several potential ownership groups, who, if all goes to plan, will have to accept a new long-term lease in the state-owned New Orleans Arena in order to buy the team.

"The future of the Hornets in New Orleans is brighter than it's ever been," Stern said.

Meanwhile, the Clippers have plenty of reason for optimism themselves.

The 26-year-old Paul is a four-time All-Star who averaged 18.7 points and 9.8 assists last season, his sixth in the NBA. He will earn \$16.4 million this year and has a player option for the 2012-13 season—in which he is due \$17.8 million.

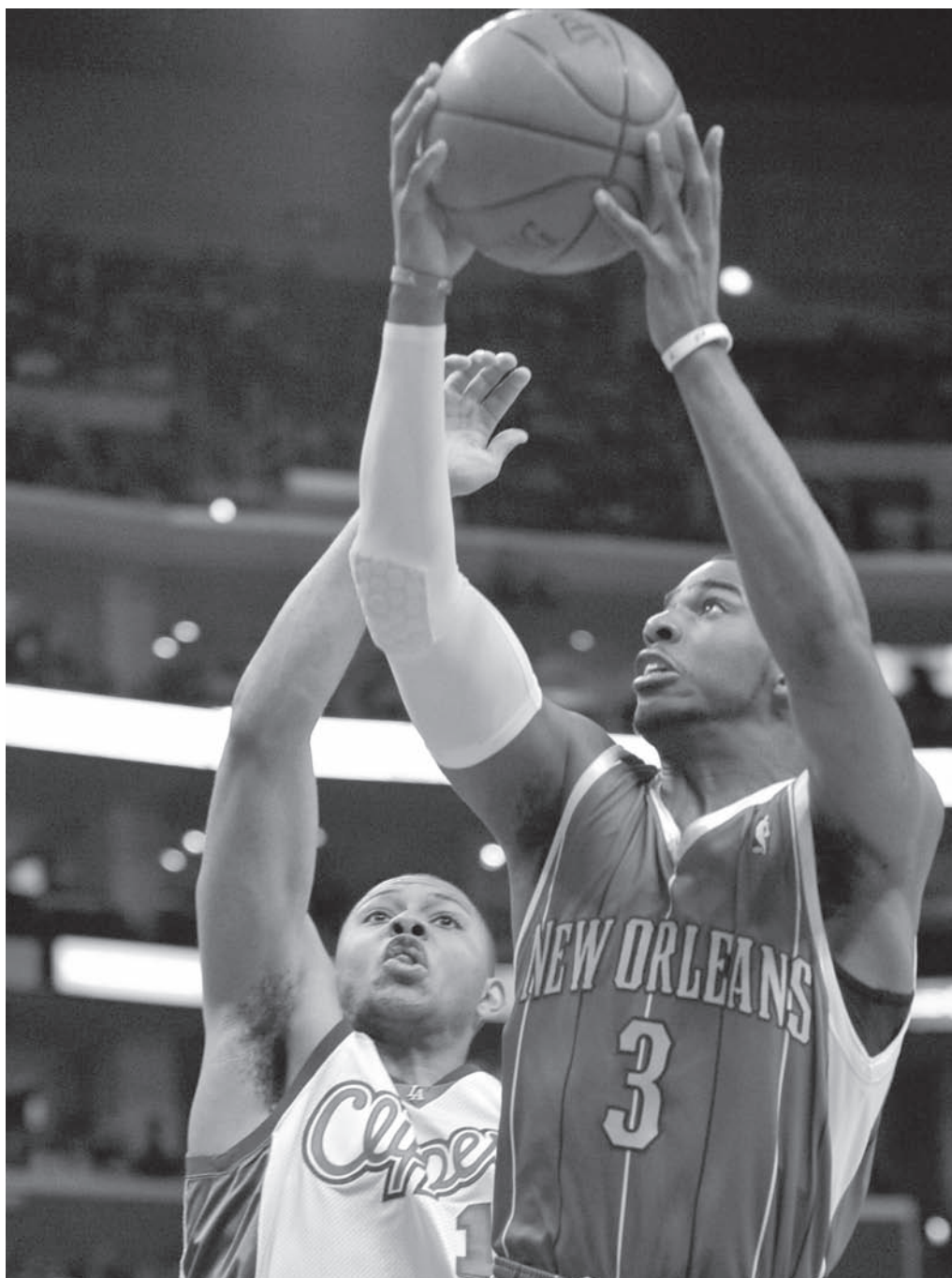
Paul's move to the Clippers means he'll now be able to make alley-oop lobbs to a young star famous for dunking over a car. That would be forward Blake Griffin, who averaged 22.5 points and 12.1 rebounds last season, his first as a pro.

The Hornets get a prolific young shooting guard in Gordon, who turns 23 on Christmas Day and averaged 22.3 points last season. Gordon would be a restricted free agent after this season unless he signs an extension with New Orleans. Hornets general manager Dell Demps those talks haven't started yet.

The 6-foot-9 Aminu is a second-year pro who averaged 5.6 points and 3.3 rebounds as a rookie.

The 7-foot Kaman, 29, is an eight-year veteran who averaged 12.4 points and seven rebounds last season, but played in only 32 games because of a left ankle injury. He's in the last year of his contract, which will pay him \$12.2 million this season.

"With this trade, we now have three additional



This April 1, 2009 file photo shows New Orleans Hornets guard Chris Paul (3) getting by Los Angeles Clippers guard Eric Gordon (10) for the basket in the first half of an NBA basketball game in Los Angeles. AP

players who were among the top eight draft picks in their respective drafts as well as our own first-round pick and (another) first-round pick," Demps said. "Aminu is a young talent with a bright future, Gordon is a big-time scorer and one of the best (shooting) guards in the league and Kaman is a proven center and former All-Star."

ESPN, citing anonymous sources, first reported the trade, which also involves New Orleans sending two 2015 second-round draft picks to the Clippers.

"We wanted to make sure that we got the best possible deal for a player of Chris' caliber, and we feel great about the outcome," said Jac Sperling, who Stern appointed as the Hornets' governor after the league bought the team in December 2010.

The Hornets can only hope the deal will sit well with fans and area businesspeople, who bought more than 10,000 season tickets despite the lock-out in an effort to show the NBA their community could make the franchise viable for whatever ownership group eventually buys the club.

Paul, whom the Hornets drafted fourth overall in 2005, told New Orleans earlier this month that he was not going to sign an extension, and Demps had been trying to trade him since to avoid losing him in free agency with no compensation after this season.

Demps came close to making a three-team deal last Thursday that would have sent Paul to the Lakers. The Lakers would have sent Lamar Odom to the Hornets and Pau Gasol to Houston, while the Rockets would have sent Luis Scola, Kevin Martin, Goran Dragic, and a first-round draft choice to New Orleans.

Stern, however, told Demps to take that deal off the table because he thought the Hornets could do better, both in terms of personnel and salary obligations.

While the move caused speculation that Stern

was acting against Demps' better judgment, Demps said he and Stern were acting "hand in hand," while Stern said people who anonymously leaked details of the proposed Lakers trade did so because they "were trying to force him to make that deal."

Paul showed up for Hornets training camp last Friday but has not spoken to reporters since. He was excused from a normally mandatory media event on Wednesday, hours before the trade went through, in which players pose for photos in uniform and talk about the upcoming season.

For the Hornets, the urgency to make a deal appeared to be growing, even though Demps insisted earlier Wednesday that the Hornets had no timeline and would not be rushed into a "rash decision."

Still, Demps acknowledged that it was hard for the Hornets to pursue free agents and further build their roster while Paul's status was in limbo. If trade talks had dragged on much longer, the Hornets could have gone into Friday night's preseason opener at Memphis with little idea of what their roster would look like in their first regular season game at Phoenix on Dec. 26.

Other than Paul, the Hornets had only five returning veterans under contract: center Emeka Okafor, forward Trevor Ariza, point guard Jarrett Jack, second-year swingman Quincy Pondexter and shooting guard Marco Belinelli.

The addition of Gordon, Aminu and Kaman give New Orleans desperately needed depth while opening the way for the franchise to further strengthen its roster through free agency.

Meanwhile, the Hornets also could look forward to an additional first-round draft choice next summer. The pick originally belonged to Minnesota, meaning it will be tied to where the Timberwolves finish in the standings this season.

"For the long-term future of the New Orleans Hornets, this is the best deal," Demps said.

Magic: Howard saga could go 'to end of the season'

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)—Magic general manager Otis Smith said Wednesday the team's goal remains to keep Dwight Howard in a Magic uniform as long as they possibly can and that the trade talks "could go to the end of the season."

Smith would not say whether trade talks for the center are off, but did say there was no deal in place.

"We're at the same place we've always been," Smith said. "We don't have a deal until we have a deal. Right now we still have him in a Magic uniform, and that's where we expect him to be until that changes."

Howard, who is entering the last year of his contract, confirmed over the weekend that he had requested a trade to New Jersey, Dallas or the Los Angeles Lakers. However, the 26-year-old center has since publicly softened his stance, saying he would be amenable to remaining in Orlando.

The Magic have said they will not risk losing Howard without compensation, which means they must either sign him or trade him before the March deadline. However, Smith said they could keep Howard beyond that.

"As I've said, our objective is to keep him in a Magic uniform as long as we possibly can," Smith said. "With that said, we could go to the end of the season."

Howard tried to deflect all trade questions Wednesday.

"Nobody will understand what I'm going through, what we as players have to go through, night in and night out, unless you're a player," he said. "I could write a book of all the stuff I've heard from teammates. Other guys around the league hear it. A lot of people have called me to make sure I stayed off my Twitter, my Facebook, so I don't have to go through (the public reaction)."

"But it's a process, and I think I'm doing a great job of not letting it affect who I am. At one point it was, but I'm not going to let that affect me . . . It's been a roller coaster, but I'm enjoying it. I'm going on a good ride."

And it could be a long one.

Though there are reports that the Nets have been trying to engineer a multiple-team trade to get Howard, Smith indicated nothing is imminent.

"I think we're going to continue to talk to every team out there, but that doesn't mean anything is going to happen," he said.

Coach Stan Van Gundy said the Magic's practice sessions have been relatively free of distractions. They open a two-game preseason at Miami Sunday night and will open the regular season on Dec. 25 at Oklahoma City.

"I was kind of expecting this," guard J.J. Redick said. "I knew that there would be this cloud of uncertainty around Dwight because I saw what happened last year with Carmelo (Anthony), I saw what happened the year before that with LeBron (James), and Dwight is obviously in their league of superstardom. So there's going to be a lot of attention until something happens."

With the hammer of free agency, Howard appears to be in control of what happens. But for now, at least, it seems the Magic can control when anything happens.

"Dwight and I have talked about this. He has a great heart and he genuinely wants to please people, whether that's fans, teammates, our management, our coaches. He wants to be well-liked," Redick said. "Anytime you run into a situation like this, people take things personally. If he was to get traded, I think people would take that as a knock on Orlando."

"Dwight recognizes and knows that this city has been great for him and he's been great for this city. My hope is that he will continue to be great for this city."

Tebow mixes faith and football with no apologies



ENGLEWOOD, Colo. (AP)—The Gospel and the gridiron are inextricably intertwined in Tim Tebow's world.

The scrambling quarterback and devout Christian draws as much scrutiny for mixing faith with football as he does for his unconventional winning ways.

With all eyes on the quirky QB who has led the Denver Broncos' remarkable resurgence, Tebow isn't shy about publicly professing his religious beliefs, often ending interviews with a hardy "God Bless!"

He inspired a viral phenomenon known as "Tebowing" when he dropped to a knee in prayerful reflection as his teammates celebrated around him in Miami after the first in a string of six outrageous comebacks.

Raised by missionary parents, Tebow wore Bible verses on his eye black at Florida and still preaches to villagers in the Philippines and inspires inmates during jailhouse talks.

And he's sharing his religious beliefs with his teammates as enthusiastically as he yells the cadence at the line of scrimmage on Sundays.

Coach John Fox asked Tebow to give the weekly address to the team on the eve of a game against at San Diego last month, and nobody was surprised when Tebow shared Proverbs 27:17—"As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another," something Tebow deemed appropriate as offense, defense and special teams feed off one another in what NFL junkies call "complementary football."

Another time, Tebow approached defensive players before a home game against the New York Jets and told them not to fret, God's got this.

"I like his passion," Fox said. "I think in today's world with all that's going on in sport and our society, I think it's wonderful."

Others cringe.

Former Broncos quarterback Jake Plummer said he likes Tebow but would like him a lot more if he would quit reminding everybody how much he loves Jesus Christ.

No way, Tebow said, insisting he isn't "just a Christian or a believer at church."

Many an athlete has used his platform as a pulpit.

Chap Clark, a professor at Fuller Theological Seminary, a prominent evangelical school based in California, said Tebow's unorthodox route to success, after so many predicted he would fail as a quarterback, has set him and his faith apart, even from the many other athletes who talk about their religious principles.

"Tim has this ferocity as a competitor, but it's still a game to him. He is consistently saying that football is not the center of life," Clark said. "His great strength is that even people who don't agree with his faith at all



Denver Broncos quarterback Tim Tebow reacts after scoring a touchdown in the fourth quarter against the New York Jets in an NFL football game, Thursday, Nov. 17, 2011, in Denver.

play their best around him."

Tebow recently told The Associated Press that he knows his openness about his religion can be divisive but he feels compelled to share his story of salvation regardless of the sensitivity of the subject, and he relayed one of his favorite quotes: "I don't know what my future holds, but I know who holds my future," in showing how leans on his faith so he can focus on football unencumbered by others' opinions.

"To get me through? Without a doubt, 100 percent," Tebow said. "And that's the thing about my faith: it's not just something that happens when you're at church or happens when you're praying or reading the Scripture. It's part of who you are, as a person, as a player, in your life and everything."

Teammate Brian Dawkins, who's equally enthusiastic about sharing his Christianity, said he can't fathom why anyone would have a problem with somebody invoking his right to free speech or freedom of religion.

"He doesn't pull up a pulpit in the middle of the locker room and say, 'Hey, everybody, gather 'round, let me tell you something.' That's not how this thing works," Dawkins said. "It's individual. If someone asks a question, we'll share our faith

and our testimony.

"I don't understand why it's such a big deal. Tebow, he's not the first one, Reggie White, Irving Fryar, there are many guys who have lived their lives with outside faith. But for whatever reason, Tim gets so much grief now. To this day, I don't understand it.

"Football is what we do, not who we are."

Amen to that, Tebow said.

The scrambler, who sometimes sings hymns as he runs onto the football field to stay calm in crunch time, said he can't compartmentalize his faith because it's such an integral part of who he is.

"Unfortunately, a lot of people do, but what I feel is living your faith and being genuine is in everything you do and that's football, that's life," Tebow said.

So, he's not going to stop praying on the field or praising God in public even if some find it offensive.

Whether or not his teammates share in his tenets, there's no denying he's inspiring them.

"He had everybody listening" when he spoke about the Proverbs, linebacker Wesley Woodyard said. "Just to see him get up there and talk and believe in himself, that's something that spreads throughout the whole

team. He believes in himself, so we believe in him."

Before a game against the Jets last month, Tebow approached Woodyard and cornerback Champ Bailey, among others, to share his faith.

"He said God just came and told him to just make sure that he spreads the word and tell everybody, don't worry about a thing and at the end of the day give credit to God," Woodyard recounted.

"Probably if anything I said, 'Don't worry. There's a plan for whatever. Let's go and give our heart out and be the same no matter what. Let's give God the glory win or lose and go lay our hearts on the line,'" Tebow said. "That's usually what I most often say, something like that."

It's not like Tebow is proselytizing, inducing others to convert to his faith, his teammates say.

"The thing about Tim, I respect him, because he's never pushed his religion off on anybody," Woodyard said. "He just goes out there and believes in God himself and shows it every day."

Randall Cunningham, also a mobile quarterback who regularly expressed his religious views during his playing career, said many people criticize Christians for being hypocrites

and maybe expect Tebow to fall from grace.

"But I'm going to tell you something, that kid is not a hypocrite," Cunningham said. "... I watch him. He cares about his team, he cares about the fans, he cares about the game, he cares about success and he knows that he can do all things through Christ and that's what he does and that's why he wins."

Indeed, Cunningham said he thinks the Broncos wouldn't have won seven of eight under another quarterback.

"God's hand is on him. Because he's trusting God, I believe that God honors his faith," Cunningham said.

"The Bible says that God chose the lowly things of this world, that's what everybody says about him, that he's not a good quarterback, he's not this and he's not that. And then what does God do? He proves everybody wrong. Through this young, 24-year-old kid, in front of the world, God uses him. That is a powerful, powerful man of God right there."

Holmgren: Browns did not check McCoy on sideline

BEREA, Ohio (AP)—Although James Harrison's devastating, illegal hit on Colt McCoy was witnessed by millions on television and thousands at Heinz Field, Cleveland's medical staff did not realize the severity of the blow when it treated the quarterback.

That was the explanation given by Browns President Mike Holmgren on Wednesday, one day after NFL medical officials and representatives of the Players Association met with the Browns to discuss the team's controversial handling of McCoy's head injury and possible changes to the league's policies on concussions.

Holmgren does not expect the league to penalize the Browns, who did not know McCoy had a concussion when they sent him back into Thursday night's game.

Union chief DeMaurice Smith said the meetings allowed the NFLPA to learn more about McCoy's treatment.

"We will review the findings with our team and take into consideration the public comments made by the Browns," Smith said in a statement.

During a nearly one-hour news conference, Holmgren explained that McCoy was not checked for a concussion on the sideline after the hit because he wasn't showing symptoms. Also, the team's medical and training staffs were unaware of the impact of Harrison's helmet-to-face mask hit because they were on the sideline working on other injured players.

McCoy was evaluated by medical personnel and trainer Joe Sheehan, who told Browns coach Pat Shurmur the QB was "good to go."

Holmgren defended the decision but acknowledged the injury may have been handled differently if the medical staff had seen McCoy get laid out by Harrison, who has been suspended one game by the league for his fifth illegal tackle on a quarterback in three years.

"I want to make something very, very clear here," said Holmgren, who was at times emotional when discussing the topic and several others. "No coach that I know, certainly not our head coach, would ever overrule a doctor and put a kid in a game where a doctor said you can't play. I never did it. Pat will never do it. It's not happening.

"If anybody had that in the back of their mind because it's a big game, it's the Steelers, we had a chance to win the game, we're going to roll the dice a little bit and throw him in, that's not what happened.

"That will never happen."

Holmgren said one of the issues raised at the meeting was having the league observer at games—or someone—notify the field if there's a big hit and a player should be evaluated more thoroughly.

Holmgren called the Browns' medical staff "the absolute best in football" and praised the club's handling of head injuries. Earlier in Thursday night's game, tight end Benjamin Watson and fullback Owen Marecic were both ruled out by the staff with concussions. The Browns have had nine concussions this season.

McCoy was sent home before practice on Wednesday with a headache and it's doubtful he will play this Sunday when the Browns visit Arizona. Holmgren has not yet spoken to the second-year quarterback, who was scrambling from pressure and had flipped the ball to running back Montario Hardesty when Harrison drilled him in the chin.

In giving a detailed breakdown "to set the record as straight as I can," Holmgren explained that when McCoy was hit, Sheehan and Dr. Mark Schickendantz ran on the field not knowing exactly what had happened.

"They were all working on other injured players, either in the bench area or behind players, so they did not see the play," Holmgren said. "Then, they heard a crowd reaction. Someone said, 'Colt's down.'"

Bonds' sentencing brings BALCO saga near a close



SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—The

largest federal criminal investigation into sports doping began more than nine years ago with a tax agent digging through the trash of the now notorious Bay Area Laboratory Co-Operative. Barring an appeal, the government's work comes to an anticlimactic end Friday when Barry Bonds—the probe's highest-profile catch—is sentenced for obstruction of justice.

In between, the federal government spent millions of dollars and untold staff hours obtaining the convictions of 11 people. Six of them, including track star Marion Jones, were ensnared for lying to grand jurors, federal investigators or the court. Five men, including Bonds' personal trainer Greg Anderson, pleaded guilty to steroid distribution charges stemming from their BALCO connections.

The investigation in general—and the pursuit of Bonds in particular—ignited a debate over whether the government's long involvement was the best use of public resources.

More than seven years after he testified before a grand jury investigating BALCO, Major League Baseball's all-time home runs leader was convicted on just one of four remaining counts against him. And the jury deadlocked on whether Bonds lied about taking performance enhancing drugs.

Now, federal sentencing guidelines suggest a prison term of between 15 months and 21 months. But federal probation officers are recommending that Bonds receive no time, citing his charitable work, the nature of the crime and his otherwise spotless criminal record. U.S. District Judge Susan Illston has sentenced two other BALCO figures convicted of similar crimes to probation and house arrest.

Was it all worth it?

"It absolutely was," said MacGregor Scott, the former U.S. attorney for Sacramento, now in private practice at Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe. "It brought a focus and awareness to the steroids issue that wasn't there before."

Scott said prosecutors had to go after Bonds once they concluded he lied to the grand jury when he denied knowingly using performance-enhancing drugs and said he allowed only doctors to inject him. Dozens of other athletes testified truthfully, Scott said.

"There aren't two sets of laws, one for Bonds and one for everybody else," Scott said. "The grand jury is the bedrock of the criminal justice system in the United States."

The probe did lead directly to former U.S. Sen. George Mitchell's in-depth investigation of drug use in Major League Baseball and his seminal Mitchell



In this June 23, 2011, file photo, former San Francisco Giants baseball player Barry Bonds leaves the federal courthouse in San Francisco after a hearing about his perjury trial. AP

Report, which in turn prompted MLB and its players' union to strengthen their steroids policy.

Yet the relatively short list of convictions leaves some, perhaps most notably the BALCO founder himself, unimpressed.

"Obviously, the BALCO case brought about a greater public awareness regarding the rampant use of drugs at the elite level of sport, which is a good thing," said Victor Conte, the BALCO founder and president—who spent four months in prison after pleading guilty to steroids distribution. "As the BALCO case comes to a close, I don't think it was the highest and best use of the tens of mil-

lions of taxpayer dollars that were spent on the case."

Bonds will have 14 days after his sentencing to file a notice of appeal.

The trial itself ended ambiguously in April about three weeks after it began.

The jury concluded Bonds purposely evaded responding during testimony to a grand jury investigating steroids distribution in sports with a rambling non sequitur to a question about drug injections, and the jurors convicted him of obstruction of justice. But they couldn't reach a unanimous agreement on the heart of the case, deadlocking on three charges alleging Bonds

lied to the grand jury when he denied knowingly using performance-enhancing drugs and testifying that no one other than his doctors ever injected him.

Prosecutors in September dropped those charges, foregoing another trial and declaring the one conviction showed the value of the Bonds prosecution.

The government's lead investigator, Jeff Novitzky, said Bonds first came to his attention during his weekly Monday night raids of BALCO's trash during the summer and fall of 2002. Novitzky, who was with the Internal Revenue Service then and is now a Food and Drug Administration investigator, said he

found a magazine article quoting Bonds as crediting BALCO with helping him pump up and increase his power.

Novitzky gathered more evidence connecting Bonds to BALCO during September 2003 raids of the lab and the home of Greg Anderson, Bonds' personal trainer at the time. Three months later, Bonds was called before the grand jury and granted immunity from prosecution so long as he testified truthfully.

Despite the jury's mixed verdict, prosecutors still insist Bonds lied.

"The evidence at trial demonstrated that Bonds went into the

grand jury with the intention of providing false statements and obstructing the grand jury's efforts to get to the truth in the BALCO matter," prosecutors wrote the judge last week seeking a prison sentence of 15 months for the former San Francisco Giants slugger. "Without truthful testimony, the judicial system simply cannot function properly in its mission to get to justice."

In recommending that Bonds serve a term of house arrest, probation and community service—but no prison time—the federal probation department called Bonds' conviction an "aberration" and cited his "significant history of charitable, civic and prior good works" as reasons for the judge to "downward depart" from federal guidelines.

The department's report is confidential, but was cited in part by Bonds' lawyers last week in arguing for probation and volunteer work. Earlier this year, Bonds announced he would pay for the college education of the two children of Bryan Stow, the Giants fan who remains hospitalized after the highly publicized opening day beating in the parking lot of Dodger Stadium.

Bonds' lawyers quote an unidentified nurse writing in a letter to Illston that Bonds often visits sick children at the University of California, San Francisco's Benioff Children's Hospital. He paid for the 2009 renovation of what is now the Barry Bonds Family Foundation Playroom, which he visited in June.

"Barry Bonds is a hero to us at the UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital," the nurse wrote. "I consider being a character witness for Barry Bonds a privilege."

Saunders, Kuo, and Scott become free agents

NEW YORK (AP)—Former All-Star pitchers Joe Saunders and Hong-Chih Kuo, and Baltimore outfielder Luke Scott became free agents Tuesday after their teams declined to offer 2012 contracts.

Atlanta reliever Peter Moylan and St. Louis infielder Ryan Theriot also were among the 30 players set free when their teams failed to offer deals before the midnight EST deadline.

Skip Schumaker was let go in a technicality, then agreed to a \$3 million, two-year contract with the Cardinals.

An All-Star for the Los Angeles Angels in 2008, Saunders was 12-13 with a 3.69 ERA last season for the Arizona Diamondbacks.

Kuo had 12 saves for the Dodgers in 2010 and made the All-Star team, then slumped to a 1-2 record with a 9.00 ERA this year. He had arthroscopic

surgery on his left elbow Friday to remove a loose body and scar tissue.

The 33-year-old Scott was acquired by Baltimore in the December 2007 trade that sent Miguel Tejada to the Houston Astros. Scott was voted the Orioles' most valuable player in 2010, but he was hindered by a torn right labrum this year and batted only .220 with nine home runs and 22 RBIs.

Also let go were Kansas City left-hander Aaron Laffey, Chicago Cubs catcher Koyie Hill, Washington left-hander Doug Slaten, Minnesota lefty Jose Mijares, San Diego outfielder Jeremy Hermida, Colorado outfielder Ryan Spilborghs, Orioles pitchers Willie Eyre and Jo-Jo Reyes, Boston left-hander Rich Hill

and Tampa Bay right-hander Andy Sonnanstine.

In the hours before the deadline, Los Angeles Dodgers outfielder Tony Gwynn Jr. agreed to a \$2 million, two-year contract.

Toronto agreed to one-year deals with catcher Jeff Mathis (\$1.5 million), right-hander Jesse Litsch (\$975,000) and right-hander Dustin McGowan (\$600,000). Oakland gave one-year contracts to infielders Daric Barton (\$1.1 million) and Adam Rosales (\$600,000), and catcher Landon Powell (\$620,000).

Also getting one-year deals were Colorado pitcher Kevin Slowey (\$2.75 million), San Diego outfielder Chris Denorfia (\$1,165,000), Pittsburgh pitcher Jason Grilli (\$1.1 million), Boston reliever Matt

Albers (\$1,075,000), San Francisco infielder Mike Fontenot (\$1.05 million), Houston catcher Humberto Quintero (\$1 million), Los Angeles Angels pitcher Jerome Williams (\$920,000), Milwaukee catcher George Kottaras (\$700,000) and Miami infielder Donnie Murphy (\$560,000).

Declining to offer contracts is a way clubs can avoid going to salary arbitration with players who otherwise would be eligible. Sometimes, it's a way to get around the maximum cut rule.

Some of those cut loose find success with new teams. Russell Martin was let go by the Los Angeles Dodgers at the deadline last year and wound up hitting 18 home runs as the New York Yankees' primary catcher. He had a \$4 million base salary and earned the maximum available in bonuses: \$1,375,000.



Saunders

Christmas Island Relay kicks off tomorrow



The Northern Marianas Athletics will be holding the Christmas Island Relay tomorrow

The 13.7-mile race will start from the Pacific Islands Club in San Antonio and end at the Last Command Post in Marpi and is open to a team of five runners. Individuals can also run the entire course.

For the five-person team, three runners must cover three miles each, another will run 2.7 miles, while the fifth member will take the remaining two miles. Teams can enter in the open division or youth category. For the open division, each squad must have one U16 runner, one female runner, and a runner in the 40-and-above



From left, Mamiko and Joshua Berger, Vinnie Inos, and Ketson "Jack" Kabiriel of Mami's Boys near the finish line of last year's Christmas Island Relay in Marpi. Stuart Smith also joined the winning team.

age group.

Entrance fee is \$5 per runner or \$25 per team, while solo runners must pay the \$10 entry fee. Registration starts at 5am, while

the race begins at 6am. Prizes await the Top 3 finishers in the team event and soloist (men's and women's).

Last year, Mami's Boys

topped the race. The winning squad was composed of Mamiko and Joshua Berger, Vinnie Inos, Stuart Smith, and Ketson "Jack" Kabiriel and it completed the race in one hour, 29 minutes, 10 seconds, only 10 seconds ahead of runners-up Cheetohs. Todd Montgomery, Melody Matson, Terra Allen, Scott Hayden, and Yosh Gabaldon comprised Cheetohs.

Rounding out the Top 3 were the Pinoy Runners, who submitted 1:31:10. Pinoy Runners had Butch Sublemente, Caesar Danao, Ronald Villafra, Florence Antonio, and Nap Dizon as members.

In the solo division, Keum Bae Ji placed first in the men's division with a time of 1:41:10, followed by Chad Lowe (1:54:37) and Shimizu

Yasushi (2:06:32). Noriko Jim prevailed in the women's division with her time of 1:52:20

(*Roselyn B. Monroyo*)

ALL

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in the first pairing, 4-1. The all-MP United finals will be played at 2pm.

In the second semis match, MP United Silver's Jehn Joyner missed his first attempt for a goal, but eventually found his target and finished with a hat-trick. Jake Lee also had three goals, while Ryota Ito contributed one in MP United Silver's dominating victory.

Joyner attacked Matansa's defense in the third minute, but overshot his mark. In his second attempt in the fifth minute, he beat Mayjohn Catindig in a foot-race and made a cross. Matansa goalie Harrison Smith opted to go after Joyner instead of staying at his spot, but it was already too late, as the ball rolled toward the left post.

MP United Silver's second goal came from Lee's penalty kick in the 15th minute with Smith partially tapping the ball, but eventually losing it. Fifteen minutes later, Joyner got his second goal with Andrew Johnson starting the play off a penalty kick a few feet away from midcourt. Johnson hit the ball and it landed in front of Joyner near the penalty box and with Matansa's defense yet to set the latter dribbled and made another cross for a 3-0 lead. MP United Silver eventually ended the first half with a 4-0 lead as a minute after Joyner's second goal, Lee slipped past his defenders and drilled another goal.

MP United Silver could have scored more than four goals in the first half, as it aggressively attacked Matansa's defense, but Smith dove for several saves. Del Rosario's wards dominated possession in the first half and on several occasions when Matansa managed to bring the ball to their side, Enrico Del Rosario, Kennedy Izuka, and John Taisacan were there to either kick the leather out or stole it from the opposing players.

In the second half, it took a while for MP United Silver to score again. The first goal in the final frame came in the 60th minute with Joyner receiving a pass from Angelo Jones, stopping the ball at the center of the penalty box, and then dribbling to his right before kicking the ball in against two defenders to complete the hat-trick.

Lee duplicated Joyner's feat eight minutes later when he recovered a loose ball and tapped the ball. MP United Silver made two attempts in a bid to get its sixth goal, but Smith was there for the saves before Lee finally put it in as he lurked in the penalty area. Then three minutes before the second half ended, Ito broke into the scoreboard for the final tally.

Matansa almost lit up the scoreboard twice in the second half, but failed to get the breaks in the end. Frank Mettao made the first attempt, hitting a cross, but MP United Silver goalie Gregzon Fontanilla slid to his right and caught the ball. In Matansa's second attempt, Antonio Bornilla eluded his defenders on the left side of the penalty area, but when he kicked the ball, he missed the leather and MP United Silver players picked up the loose ball.

In the first semis game, MP United U18 capitalized on a depleted Paire U18 crew for the easy win.

Paire played with only 10 players since Frankie Camacho was issued a red card off a net ball with MP United U18 on a scoring opportunity in the 11:21 mark of the first half. Paire had earlier lost goalie Don Cabrera, who was given a red card in their against MP United Blue last weekend.

With Paire missing one defender, MP United U18 took a 2-0 lead in the first half. Jin Han Yoo and Yi Shan Wang scored for MP United U18 in the 8:19 and 11:32 mark of the first half, respectively. Also making a goal for MP United U18 were Dae Min Jeon (65th) and Taek Han Yoon (77th), while Daniel Agulto was the lone player to score for Paire.

YOUTH

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were unavailable at press time. Two more teams are entered in the boys U15 division with We-D-Fly debuting in the league tomorrow against Konflikt at 3pm. Astig Futsal completes the field and it will play its first game this Sunday against Shirley's Boys at 5:30pm.

In the boys U18 division, the Thundercats were scheduled to square off against IT&E at 7:30pm yesterday. Paire players are suiting up for the Thundercats, while IT&E will be leaning on MP United U18 strikers.

RGA Family Fun Day Sunday at COP



The Refaluwash Golf Association will be ending the 2011 season with the staging of the RGA Family Fun Day this Sunday at Coral Ocean Point.

The event will feature a two-man scramble competition and check in time is set for 10am.

Tee off will take place at 11am and awards ceremony will be held at 4pm at the Chamolinian Utt in Garapan.

Besides the winners in the two-man scramble tournament, RGA will also recognize at the awards ceremony the winner of the club championship held early this month and the recipients of the Sid K. Peter and Tony Taitano awards.

from the monthly Ace titlists.

The club championship was played on Dec. 11, but the winner will be announced only this Sunday.

For more information about RGA tournaments, contact Tars Olopai at 483-5508, Tony Rogolifo at 288-3515, and Jess Wabol at 288-1129. (*RGA*)

RASTGUIY

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shared third place with fellow North Pacific player Ayana Rengiil of Palau.

In the doubles division, Rastguiy and teammate Vinda Teally of the Solomon Islands are still in contention. The second-seeded pair was at the lower half of the draw and drew a bye in the first round. The tandem was scheduled to meet Ellen Ashley and Ruby Owen last Wednesday, but results were unavailable at press time.

able at press time.

Rastguiy is a member of the Pacific Oceania Touring Team that will participate in tournaments in Hamilton, Gisborne, and Auckland. The New Zealand trip was Rastguiy's second in a row and in last year's competition in Waikato, she made it all the way to the girls U12 singles finals before bowing to seed Nina Paripovich, 2-6, 1-6.

In his return trip to Hamilton, Rastguiy also joined the girls U14 singles and won her opening match against Samanta Oliver, 7-5, 6-1. The CNMI net-

ter dropped her second round match over No. 12 seed Charlotte Booth, 5-7, 1-6, to fall to the loser's bracket where the former managed to march into the semis.

In the consolation draw, Rastguiy defeated Ashley Gorrell, 6-1, 6-1, and Ayesha Horley, 3-6, 6-4, 10-4, for a semis ticket. In the Final Four, Rastguiy bowed to No. 9 seed Anastasia Tapusoa in three tough sets, 4-7, 6-4, 9-11.

Rastguiy also joined the girls U14 doubles and partnered with Rengiil. The duo won against Kelani Chene and

Ruby Coffin in the first round, 3-6, 6-3, 10-6. In the second round, Rastguiy and Rengiil led over top-ranked Clark and Ella Hassall, 3-0, but retired, awarding the seeded pair the win. The match report did not indicate the reason for Rastguiy and Rengiil's retirement.

After the tournament in Hamilton, Rastguiy and company will head to Gisborne for the 2011 Poverty Bay East Coast Junior Open. Then the group's last stop will be Auckland for the 2011 Auckland Christmas Tournament.

MDX

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tributed in the fourth canto en route to their 14-point victory.

8th Division was held to 59 markers after failing to score more than 20 points in each of the four quarters. Its biggest output (17) came in the first period, but MDX still went up, 22-17, behind the six markers of Lauron and four points each from Zack Diaz and Ziddy Johanes.

MDX retained the lead in the second frame 40-31, as 8th Division still struggled offensively, making only 14 markers. Then in the second half, teams switched court and so did their fortunes when MDX was limited to 10 markers, it's lowest production in the game. However, 8th Division outgunned MDX by only two points, leaving the latter with a 50-43 advantage.

Lauron was scoreless in the

third period, but Mike Palacios kept MDX on the driver's seat with his six points. Then in the fourth, Lauron made up for his absence in the third, as he went to work early in the crucial final canto to preserve the win. Palacios supported Lauron with 13 markers, while Zack Babauta chipped in 10.

Blue Haus 79, FGC Builders 70

Blue Haus leaned on its impressive 3-point shooting to beat FGC in the curtain-raiser and grab a share of second place with Wushin Express.

Blue Haus converted nine triples, drilling three of them in the fourth canto en route to the nine-point victory. FGC canned only four treys to remain winless after five games.

FGC looked good in the first period when it led, 23-18, off the six straight points of J.R. Barrios. However, Blue Haus claimed the driver's seat in the

second canto with Jun Abedes leading the rally with his nine points. Blue Haus grabbed the upper hand at halftime, 44-40, with Abedes and Brandon Talania hitting back-to-back triples in the closing minutes of the second canto.

In the third period, Edwin Camacho connected on two treys while Talania made one for a 57-53 cushion. Blue Haus continued to score from downtown with Talania, Edwin Camacho, and Marlon Sison hitting one each. Joy Dayrit converted only one shot from downtown for FGC in the fourth quarter.

Badong Camacho top-scored for Blue Haus with 19 points. He didn't make a single shot from beyond the arc, but his presence in the paint gave Blue Haus the lift. Badong Camacho scored 10 of his total points in the first period to keep Blue Haus afloat before Talania and company

waxed hot in the 3-point area in the ensuing quarters. Talania and Edwin Camacho had 15 points each, while Abedes nailed 16. Barrios led FGC with 17 points.

First Game

Blue Haus 79 – B. Camacho 19, Abedes 16, E. Camacho 15, Talania 15, Olivos 4, Cruz 4.

FGC Builders 70 – Barrios 17, Montano 12, Dayrit 11, Gabaldon 8, Capalad 8, Gamboa 6, Llagas 4, Abuan 2.

Scoring by quarters: 18-23, 44-40, 57-53, 79-70.

Second Game

MDX 73 – Lauron 18, Palacios 12, Babauta 10, Diaz 8, Tenorio 7, Lisua 6, Lansang 5, Johanes 4.

8th Division 59 – Factor 16, Lansang 12, Bernardo 12, Detera 8, Culala 6, Alejandro 2, Jacob 2.

Scoring by quarters: 22-17, 40-31, 50-43, 73-59.

Chamber hopes to draw 100 in Holiday Golf tourney

By **WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND**
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REPORTER



Organizers of the 4th Annual Saipan Chamber of Commerce Holiday Golf Tournament are hoping to draw as much as 100 players in tomorrow's event set at the Coral Ocean Point Golf Course.

So far, some 50 players have already signed up for the two-person scramble. The tourney will have a 6am show time with a 7am shotgun start.

The Top 3 finishing teams in the Men's Low Gross, Men's Low Net, and Women's Low Net will win cash prizes—\$600 for the champion team, \$300 for second place, and \$200 for third place. Net scores will be calculated using the Double-Peoria scoring system.

Early registration costs \$95 per player and takes place until only today, Dec. 16. The entrance fee increases to \$105 per

person on the day of the tourney.

Entrance fee is inclusive of the greens fee, complimentary prizes, and admittance into the awards banquet, which will be held poolside at COP immediately following the competition. Guest will be charged \$20 per person at the banquet.

Proceeds of the event will go to the Chamber's education committee to help provide \$2,000 in scholarships to five worthy students and can be used at colleges in the CNMI or off-island.

Earnings will also help fund educational workshops that are conducted by volunteer Chamber members, which promote business etiquette.

There are a trio of hole-in-one prizes up for grabs, including a \$25,000 cash prize sponsored by Bank of Hawaii on hole No. 12, a \$10,000 cash prize bundle from AON Insurance and Takagi & Associates Inc., and a brand new Hyundai Accent from Triple J Motors on

hole No. 14.

In addition, for \$20, players can take part in the closest to the pin challenge on hole No. 7 and the long drive contest on hole No. 10.

Golfers can also purchase a pair of mulligans for \$20, however they cannot be shared with their partners.

There will also be a multitude of raffle prizes to be given away during the awards banquet at COP immediately following the tournament; tickets cost just \$1 apiece.

Last year, Jess Wabol and Bae Yong Man (62) came out as the Low Gross winners, while Ned Norita and Jesse Seman (68.4) took Low Net honors for the men, and Lorraine Babauta and Shirley Jones (72.8) won the Ladies Low Net category; 114 golfers turned out in last year's event, which was held at Laolao Bay Golf Resort.

For more information, call 233-7150 or email coordinator@saipanchamber.com.



Delta Air Lines' Chris Concepcion, left, and Esther Sound, right, have contributed round-trip tickets to the U.S. mainland and Japan as prizes in the Saipan Chamber of Commerce's 4th Annual Holiday Golf Tournament to be held at Coral Ocean Point tomorrow, Dec. 17, 2011. Call 233-7150 for tournament registration. Accepting for SCC are Richard Pierce and Janice Tenorio.

Dickinsons reign supreme in SRCR Sunday races

By **WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND**
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REPORTER

Jude and Butter Dickinson dominated the Saipan Radio Control Racers' monthly competitions held Sunday at the club's track in As Lito.

Jude Dickinson won both the A-Main 1/10 Stock and Open division electric short course events, while Butter Dickinson took the top prize in the B-Main Stock 1/10 electric short course affair.

Jude Dickinson's TraXXas Slash was also the top qualifier in the A-Main episode.

He finished ahead of a pair of HPI Blitzes driven by runner-up Rodney Cattalla and Jojo Saracho.

In addition, Jude Dickinson's Team Losi XXX-SCT took the pole in the open division short course event and beat Paul Salalila's Kyosho Ultima-SCR and Leo Gatus' TraXXas Slash.

Butter Dickinson followed suit in the B-Main race and came out the top qualifier en route to a first place finish in front of fellow TraXXas Slash drivers Franz Decena and Kurt Diaz.

There are over 20 active SRCR members, and growing,

which regularly take part in practices at the As Lito track every Saturday from 2pm to 6pm.

In addition, the SRCR tries to hold a daylong race once a month, usually on Sundays, from 9am to 5pm in various racing classes.

The Open Class, intended for novice drivers, was added as a result of additional turnout. The public is welcome to check out the track to learn more about their sport/hobby.

For more information, contact Rodney Catalla at 234-5911, 256-7119, or email drcc35@yahoo.com.



Remote control cars share the As Lito track with a couple of children during Saipan Radio Control Racers' monthly competition last Sunday.

Try Luck tops SEDA Ladies Bud Light Cup

By **WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND**
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REPORTER



Regular season champion Try Luck of D'Pirates Bar dominated anew the playoffs of the Saipan Electronic Dart Association's Ladies Division following an oh-so sweet 8-3 victory over sister team Star Magic last Monday.

The newly minted Bud Light Cup champion team is composed of Aida Laniyo, Matrina Lisua, Rufina Guevarra, Emily Vargas, and Luz Antonio.

The final tables, meanwhile, are set in SEDA's Inter-Government, Thursday's B-Flame Tree, and B-Fanihi divisions.

Inter-Government's DPS Enforcers, of Jonny's Bar & Grill, will host AG's Sakude in the finals on Friday.

Sixth ranked-DPS Enforcers eliminated caboose team NMC Proa, 8-6, on the road at Jonny's for a finals berth, while second-ranked AG Sakude snuck past third-seeded DYS Atidit, 8-7, in a road game at Jonny's.

AG Sakude is an overwhelming favorite for the Bud Light Cup as it upset frontrunner Team CUC in the opening round held last Dec. 2.

B-Flame Tree's finalists include Joe's Steakhouse's Skoregazzums and Bar Gaia's Gaiana-B. The Skoregazzums hosts Gaiana-B tonight at Joe's.

The seventh-ranked Skoregazzums upset fifth place Naked Fish Bar & Grill's Na'Gupu, 8-7, at home, while division leader Gaia-B trampled third place TBA One Shot, 8-0, in a road match at Joe's.

B-Fanihi's SOS Akirame-nai of Es'y Kitchen clashed with sister team Oh Yeah! Last night for the Bud Cup title at Es'y Kitchen. Results were not available as of press time.



Try Luck, seen here in a file photo, clinched the SEDA-Ladies Division 2011 Bud Light Cup championship after beating sister team Star Magic last Monday.

Second-ranked SOS knocked off top-ranked and sister squad Echoserong Kamote's in the opening round and then found a way past third-seeded World B, of Bar Gaia, 8-7, en route to a finals berth.

Oh Yeah! came into the tournament in last place, but climbed the ladder going through seventh place Jonny's Sekid before downing sixth-ranked and sister team Kitchen Shooters, 8-4, last Thursday for an outside chance for glory.

The B-Fanihi championship took place last tonight at Es'y Kitchen.

Meanwhile, SEDA's A Division wrapped up its regular season with D'Pirates' Mixed Bloodshooters 1 securing first place over the division with its win-loss record of 194-112.

Mixed Blood 1 capped its season with an 11-6 victory over the Primos in a road draw at D'Pirates.

Its sister team, Bud Brothers (178-128), took runner-up honors and finished its run on a high note with a 9-8 road win over seventh place Bammy's Proofers (140-166).

Ali'i Kamote's defeated Celebrity, 11-6, at Naked Fish and received the nod for third place as rival squads finished

the season with identical 173-133 slates.

In other results, fifth place D'Pirates' Predators defeated bottom feeder Gaiana-A, of Bar Gaia, 12-5, at home and Naked Fish's sixth-ranked Naked Fish Boyz bested ninth place Troubleshooters, 10-7, on the road at Wild Bill's Bar & Grill.

Notably, Mixed Blood 1's Joshua Wodson, Romy Intendez and Dean Borja finished second, third, and fifth place in the individual statistics out of a field of 69 players.

Wodson maintained a ratio of 20.85 points per dart through 32 games and 3.33 marks per round through 34 games for a weighted average of 57.46.

Intendez marked 22.16 PPD in 33 games with 3.20 MPR in 35 games for an average of 57.40.

In 32 games, Borja recorded 22.51 and 3.05 MPR for a WA of 56.06.

First place went to Ali'i Kamote's Kaysie Aquino who maintained 22.09 PPD with 3.27 MPR for a league best WA of 58.02, while Bud Brothers' Ernie Domingo rounded out the fourth spot with 22.41 PPD with 3.10 MPR through 36 games for a WA of 56.54.

4 shutout wins in 1st round of Budweiser Cup



There were no upsets in the opening rounds of the Saipan Billiard Association-Summer/Fall Open 8-Ball League's Budweiser Cup last Tuesday.

In fact, all four playoff matches ended in shutout wins by the higher seeded teams in both the Agingan and Obyan divisions.

Agingan's IT&E Voyagers and Jonny's Bar & Grill's Home Boyz Five advanced to the Bud Cup semifinals last Tuesday.

Top-ranked IT&E Voyagers shutout sister-team IT&E Incredible, 4-0, in a road draw at Jonny's, while the third-ranked Home Boyz Five skunked the Docomo Hustlers, 4-0, in a road match at Utopia Sports Bar.

These top contenders will duke it out next Tuesday and will face the winner between Joe's Steakhouse's Fotten Palau and VFW Post 3457's X-Tream



Wild Bar & Grill's Shark Attack pose for a team photo after skunking Crazy 8 in Tuesday's SBA Summer/Fall Open 8-Ball League Budweiser Cup match held at Jonny's Bar & Grill.

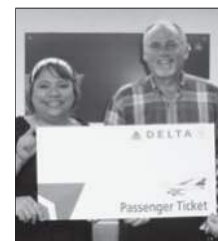
for the Budweiser Cup championship on Dec. 27.

Obyan frontrunner Shark Attack devoured Jonny's Crazy 8, 4-0, on the road and will face Jonny's Team SCS next Tuesday.

SCS went into the 19th Hole bar and pounced Poksu, 4-0.

These two teams will face off against each other in Tuesday's semifinals, while D'Pirates Bar's Pirata takes on the Titans in a road match at 19th Hole Bar.

The Obyan finals is also set for Dec. 27. *(Walter Cepeda Sutherland)*



All-MP United finals in FA Cup

Rastguiy makes semis of New Zealand tourney

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

CNMI junior player Negahr Rastguiy got off to a good start in her New Zealand trip after barging into the semifinal round of the 2011 Waikato Christmas Junior Open.

Rastguiy, who left Saipan last week for three tournaments in New Zealand, completed the girls U12 singles event played at the Waikato Tennis Centre in Hamilton and began her bid with a 6-2, 6-2 win over the unseeded Olivia McCormack in Round 2 last Saturday.



The 12-year-old CNMI bet, who was seeded first in the 30-player field and drew a bye in the first round, then faced Sophie Michi in the quarterfinals last Sunday and prevailed anew, 6-4, 6-1, to advance to the semifinals against No. 4 seed Victoria Hockley. In the semis last Monday, Rastguiy saw her winning run end when Hockley pulled off a 6-2, 6-4 triumph. Second-ranked Janvhi Clark went on to win the girls U12 singles crown after sweeping Hockley, 6-3, 6-2, while Rastguiy

See RASTGUIY on Page 30



Rastguiy



MP United Silver and Matansa U18 players shake hands after their semis game in the FA Challenge Cup last Wednesday night at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

It will be a family affair in the finals of the 2011 FA Challenge Cup with MP United Silver challenging the MP United U18 for the championship tomorrow at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.

MP United Silver and MP United U18 arranged their title showdown following separate semis wins last Wednesday night at the Oleai pitch. MP United Silver, which is composed of the club's U15 players and is



coached by Norman Del Rosario clobbered Matansa U18 in the second semis match, 7-0, while the Brad Ruzsala-mentored MP United U18 thumped Paire U18

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Youth futsal league lures 12 teams



Team Konflikt (in dark uniforms) and Shirley's Boys players and coaches pose for a group photo before their game in the opening of the 2011 SSS Youth Futsal League last night at the TSL Sports Complex.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The Saipan Soccer School opened the 2011 Youth Futsal League yesterday at the TSL Sports Complex with 12 teams participating in the inaugural competition.

Team Konflikt and Shirley's Boys played in the first game in the league last night with the former bannered by players of the MP United Silver U15 squad and coached by Norman Del Rosario. Fradel Sedillo calls the shot for Shirley's Boys, which is composed of strikers the club fielded in the recently concluded NMIFA fall league.

Results of the U15 match See YOUTH on Page 30

MDX still flawless in DLX caging



By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

MDX moved two wins away from sweeping the regular season of the 2011 DLX Basketball Invitational Friendship League after downing 8th Division, 73-69, last Wednesday night at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court.

The victory was sixth in a row for MDX, giving the team a two-win lead over second-running Wushin Express and Blue Haus, which hold similar 4-1 marks. 8th Division fell to a 2-5 mark with one more game left in the single-round robin elimination. 8th Division will face the winless Pacific Postal Plus in its last game on Dec. 19, while MDX's last two games will be against Pacific Postal (Dec. 16) and Konstrak (Dec. 19).

Alex Lauron, which led MDX with 26 points in their 65-57 triumph over SCS Heavy Equipment last Monday night, anchored their offense anew against 8th Division. He had 18 markers, making eight of them in the final canto to stop 8th Division's repeated comeback bids.

The MDX forward scored the team's first six points in the fourth period to keep their distance against 8th Division. Five other MDX players con-

See MDX on Page 30

ROSELYN B. MONROYO MDX's Alex Lauron, who pulls away for a layup in their previous game, scored 18 points in their 73-59 win over 8th Division in the DLX caging last Wednesday night at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court.